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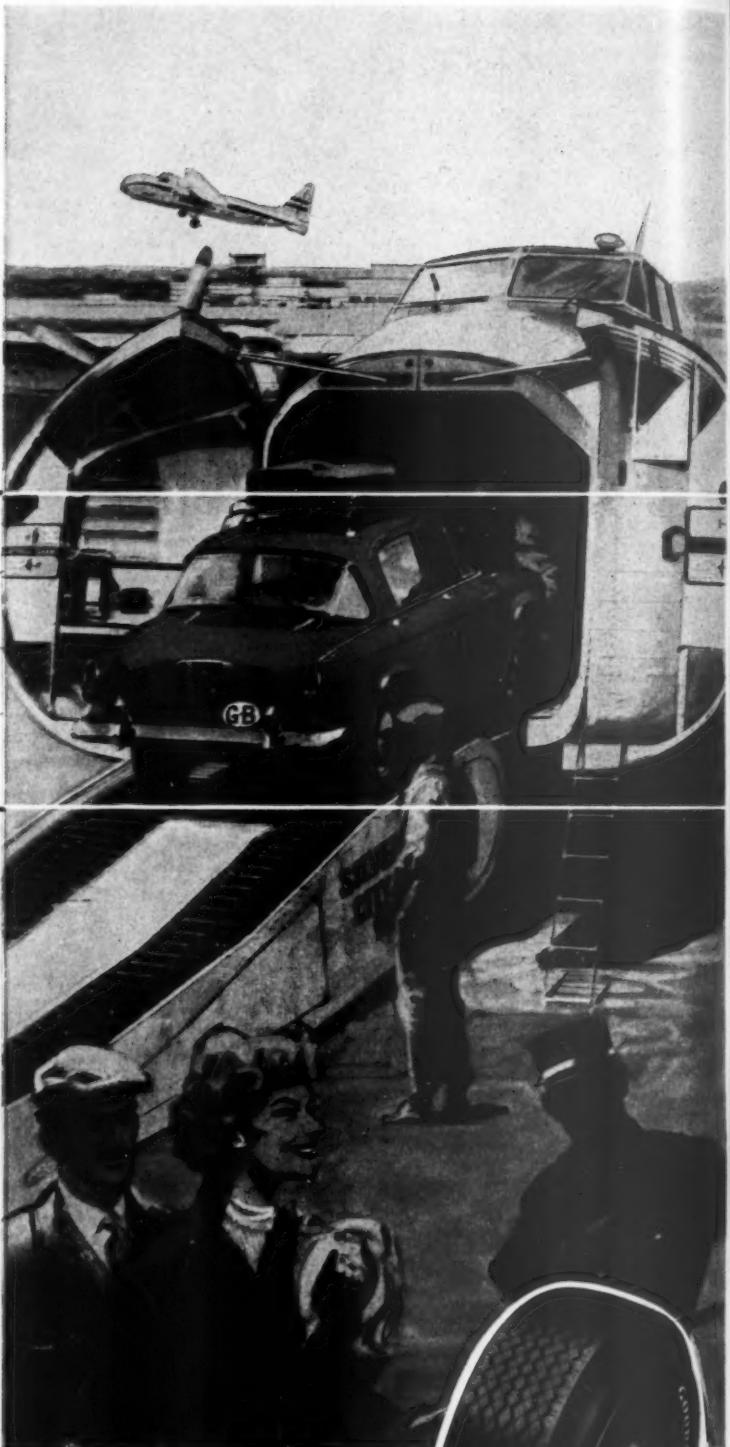


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GOOD YEAR



THE WORLD OVER, MORE PEOPLE RIDE ON GOODYEAR TYRES THAN ON ANY OTHER MAKE

PUNCH

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The London Charivari

LET us spare a moment's thought for the frustrations of people called Chatterley (in case anyone wondered, there are quite a few of them). No matter what distinguished services, public or political, a Chatterley may render, no matter how superbly he struts the stage or rides a racehorse, it is impossible for him to accept a knighthood; unless, of course, he wishes to make his wife's life a hell on earth. I gravely doubt whether, from now on, ambitious young women are going to marry Chatterleys. It's a hard fate.

Shadows Over Nottingham

ONE by one our provincial cities are being exposed as sinks. The film boys have lifted the lids from Manchester, Liverpool and Cardiff (in an earlier day it was Glasgow and Brighton) and now Nottingham is suffused with shame on account of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, to say nothing of its association with the

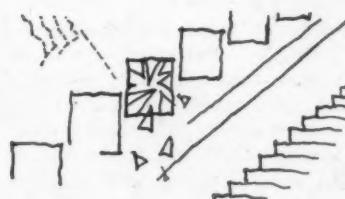


Chatterley legend. I remember a day when Nottingham was very touchy about an historian's aspersion on its courting customs. What happened, he said, was this: boy meets girl; boy has supper in girl's home; parents retire to bed; couple go to front door, open it, shout "Good night," slam door, return

to couch. Never mind, Nottingham. Any moment now there'll be a film taking Cheltenham apart. Or even Frinton-on-Sea.

You Never can Tell

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW died ten years ago this month. He was an unpredictable chap and it's hard to know how he would have received



the present film-posters of *The Millionairess* showing Sophia Loren in her suspenders.

What About Tea-breaks?

IT was no surprise to me to read that a new £150,000 electronic computer hoisted into a London office block last week "has to be housed in an air-conditioned room." This is probably only the forerunner of many demands for more and more congenial working conditions.

No Peace in our Time

I WENT to the British Toy Manufacturers' Association's display of Christmas toys in London the other day, and I regret to report that there was no sign of any hope of disarmament in the



"I'm sorry, sir, but with this one you clean us right out of back numbers of the 'News Chronicle.'"

nursery. There were tokens and omens of mini-catastrophe everywhere—tiny bombers and submarines and rockets and even a "super detailed all plastic kit" for the construction of a model 280 mm. atomic cannon, which, if properly assembled, one gathered from the picture on the box, would produce a terribly un-Christmasy mushroom cloud above a horizon red with fire. But the children were fascinated, and when some photographers wanted volunteers to cuddle a soft giant bunny and a teddy bear they were able to get only some international beauty queens who were staying at the same hotel waiting for the Miss World contest.

Lonely Bachelor of Arts

ENGLISH letters provide little support for the author of *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, Pierre Boulle, who, at 48, says he will stay a bachelor; he started writing at 36 and "would never have done it if I had been married." Compare the records of three of our best-known novelists parodied in a current *Punch* series. Dickens, before he married at 24, had done nothing else but journalism, *Sketches by Boz* and *Pickwick* and nearly a dozen of his most memorable books came between

then and leaving his wife 22 years later. Trollope, a groom at 29, wrote the whole lot, more than 20 titles, thereafter; and Kipling went to the altar at 27 with *The Jungle Book*, *Captains Courageous*, *Stalky & Co.*, *Kim* and a great deal more verse and prose still unwritten. When it comes to inspiration the Muses were women, all nine of them.

More Blossom than Fruit

MR. BUTLER, who says such humane, moderate, liberal things and no doubt has great floating-voter appeal, is as soothing at the Home Office as, before the War, he used to be at the Foreign Office. Twelve years after the Act setting up remand and detention centres, years of considerable prosperity and rising adolescent crime, there are still no remand centres and judges keep complaining there are so few detention centres that they have to let youths either hang about for months or go to the corruption of prison. Real Home Secretaries, like Sir Winston Churchill, would have got hold of big houses, fitted them out at the double and used them until proper buildings were available, and they would have built these at the same speed as offices and shops are built. The test of a politician is not what he

says he is going to do but what he has actually done. Judged by achievements during nearly four years of office Mr. Butler must be the worst Home Secretary since Mr. Clynes.

A Loophole?

I WAS especially glad, as I helped the other evening to drink away part of Mr. Laurie Lee's £1,000 award for *Cider with Rosie*, to be reassured that the money was tax-free. It gave me an idea, which I would like to pass on to publishers and editors. In future there shouldn't be any agreements with authors to provide contributions on specified terms; instead, everything to be published should be made the subject of an open competition, the publisher's or editor's decision to be final and legally binding. Such competitions would always produce the right stuff from the right contributors, because the conditions of entry could be so subtly slanted as to make them; and then all emoluments paid to writers would rate as prizes in competitions and stay free of tax.

Protection Money

THE New York City Police Commissioner has just put in a bill for one million hours overtime incurred in protecting Mr. Khrushchev and his friends during the recent U.N. General Assembly session, and the amount could come to 4,404,000 dollars. In addition to Britain not being able to afford to put a man into Space it seems that here is a Man who must not even come to Dinner.

Merely Wee

THE death of the farthing, which has produced some crocodile tears in Fleet Street, leaves me unmoved. I have never bought ribbons in a haberdasher's nor have I ever won a libel action—just. Bread and milk I have bought by proxy. I am puzzled to know how farthings have ever got into my change. Yet they have done. I am delighted that this small, complicating coin is joining the groat and the mark and the denarius; and I do not believe that those who mourn it have ever delighted in its active existence.

—MR. PUNCH

"That makes \$2,765,408 you owe me since we submerged."



ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST

Aged 85, unmarried. Has written 26 books and 35 television plays; still publishes two new ones every year as well as the Christmas annual which enshrines his original creation, Billy Bunter. Recreations: chess, music and the classics, especially Horace and Lucretius. Here, as at the birth of Bunter, illustrated by CHARLES H. CHAPMAN, 81, still drawing, cycling and taking cold baths all the year round. He has been drawing Bunter for nearly fifty years.

FRANK RICHARDS

Minister of Education

The Cabinet Room at 10 Downing Street.

Mr. Frank Richards, Minister of Education, loquitur.

IN taking up my office as Minister of Education I have pondered deeply on the need for far-reaching reforms in our educational system. I am convinced that Education need not be, as at present, a process of incarcerating young people in ugly buildings, with tired teachers and repulsive school books, and cramming reluctant young heads with generally useless knowledge. I shall endeavour to adopt the viewpoint not so much of the pedagogue as of the pupil, considering the schoolboy rather than the schoolmaster. This I acknowledge is somewhat revolutionary. But we live in an age of revolutions. Let us keep up with the times.

First of all, it is my intention to take a firm stand against the age-old superstition that young people exist chiefly for the purpose of being tormented by well-meaning elders. The urge to worry the young for their own good is latent in all of us. It seems to be ineradicable. But like other deleterious impulses it can and must be kept in check. Better for a child to drop H's than tears. Better for the boy to perpetrate howlers than to howl. Education must no longer be the Moloch on whose grisly altar the young are ruthlessly, though conscientiously, immolated. In ancient Carthage they used to tip little ones into a fiery furnace, no doubt from the best of motives. The progress of civilization has modified and mollified the method without abolishing the system, which in our own time takes the milder but still painful form of Home-work and 11-plus exams. We must progress further. These relics of barbarism I propose to abolish entirely.

Reforms are required in many other directions. It is not impossible for Education to be made attractive, even to the young. The opposite seems to have been the objective hitherto. Take, for example, the school books. We cannot wholly dispense with them. They are a necessary evil. But why make them unnecessarily repulsive? "Plain in thy neatness" may be Milton's idea of Pyrrha: but why impose

it upon young people who naturally revel in life and colour? All this will be changed. Bright-coloured jackets for all school books will in future be the rule. The boy who feels a natural sinking of the heart at the mere sight of a Virgil with its dull forbidding cover will brighten up very considerably as he looks at a vivid picture of Æneas pushing his sword through Turnus. He may even be moved to open the volume of his own accord to see what the row was about. A classic may become to him almost as attractive as a horror comic.

History will in future be taught chiefly through the medium of historical novels. It is true that fiction conveys facts inaccurately. But it does more or less convey them. Facts on their own have no appeal to the imagination without which little of a permanent nature can be accomplished. Reading *Quentin Durward* the boy will discover that Louis XI was a live human being, not merely a name and a number. *Ivanhoe* will leave in his mind a vision of Plantagenet England. Inaccurate no doubt: but it will be there. Something will be achieved: his mind will no longer be a blank on the subject.

My honourable colleagues will doubtless recall the difficulties they had, in their schoolboy days, in concealing their cribs from the gimlet eye of authority. These difficulties will not exist for the schoolboy of the future. His shining morning face will not be so often sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought. He will carry his crib under his arm as openly as any less useful volume, fearless of the master's eye.

Teachers, it is said, are overworked. But is not this due, at least in part, to their general opposition to the use of cribs, the reason for which it is hard to elucidate? Actually the crib is the boy's best friend, and hardly less the teacher's. Grim grinding at a difficult passage is more likely to produce a headache than any more profitable result. It is only too liable to make the victim exclaim with Byron: "Farewell Horace, whom I hated so!" In an age of labour-saving contrivances why deprive the schoolboy of his share? A crib is like oil on troubled waters. It smooths the passage. The boy becomes in effect his own teacher. Latin without Quelch! French without Squeers!



From now on the free use of a crib will be encouraged in all schools. It will no longer be a Bohn of contention. I do not propose, at this stage, to institute Compulsory Cribbing. For the present it will be optional. But I do not doubt that the average schoolboy may be relied upon to make extensive use of such aids.

One of my earliest measures as Minister of Education will be to provide all schools with an ample supply of cribs. Admittedly there may be some backward boys who will not benefit to the full from this reform. But the backward boy is not really a problem. Let him make his own pace, and all will be well. The brightest boys in the class do not always shine with such effulgence in the big world after schooldays. On the other hand, the dunce at school may turn out an exceedingly clever fellow in later life. This is confirmed by my own experience. I was myself a dunce at school.

Music, vocal, will take a high place in the curriculum. Every boy loves to kick up a row and why should he not? It is a natural outlet for exuberant energies that might otherwise be misdirected. A boy is like a deponent verb. He may be passive in form—under his form-master's eye—but he is always active in meaning. With all his faults his schoolmaster loves him still: but he finds it difficult to keep still. Silence is golden: but the human boy is as indifferent to such treasure as the gentleman in Horace who *ingentes oculo inretorto spectat acervos*. Pluperfect indicatives and imperfect subjunctives, taken neat, will never rouse his enthusiasm. But the pill may be coated with jam. I am considering a plan for providing Latin versions of vigorous and tuneful popular songs which boys love to bawl, for use in schools. What boy

would not enjoy singing, or shouting, say *Waltzing Matilda*, even in Latin? Or one of Mr. Gilbert's entertaining lyrics? This will enable him to realize that Latin actually is a human language with a kick in it, and by no means the dust and ashes he has supposed it to be. Something like this:

Here the Minister of Education breaks into song, to the tune of "When I was a lad I served a term," from "H.M.S. Pinafore."

*Versabar juvenis ego
Procuratoris in domo,
Verrebam muros et solum,
Osti poliebam capulum,
Poliebam plane capulum,
Et nunc praefectus classis sum.*

Will not the most backward boy join joyfully in yelling the chorus:

*Osti capulum poliebat, et
Praefectus classis nunc floret.*

And a spot of Latin will not only find admission into his thick head but will linger there.

Games, under my administration, will invariably take precedence of classes. My guiding rule will be cricket before Cicero, soccer before Sophocles, hockey before Horace. But even so simple a game as "Ducks and Drakes" will not be neglected. In these democratic days any Tom, Dick or Harry may aspire to a political career culminating in Cabinet rank, as many of my colleagues can testify. A favourable wind on the Heath may blow him into Downing Street. Any ambitious lad may end up as Chancellor of the Exchequer. In such an event proficiency in "Ducks and Drakes" will



"... to provide all schools with an ample supply of cribs."



enable him to carry on unchanged the traditions of that high office.

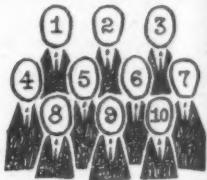
Mens sana in corpore sano will be the aim: but not in that order. *Corpus* must be *sanum* if *mens* is to be *sana*. Open-air activities must always take first place. Attendance in class will, therefore, be subject to the state of the weather. School

reports will be of less importance than weather reports. On fine days, which in our climate have a very considerable rarity value, all classes will be dismissed and led or driven into the open air; and there will be the young barbarians all at play. Teachers will have a rest from their pupils: pupils from their teachers. Both will benefit enormously; and everyone will be almost as happy as if there were no schools at all.

Such, in brief outline, is my proposed policy as Minister of Education. Whether it will prove popular with schoolmasters is perhaps open to some doubt. But there is, I think, no doubt whatever that it will be hailed with acclaim by their pupils.

Other portfolios will be offered to:

- (6) **A. P. H.**
Home Secretary
- (7) **STIRLING MOSS**
Minister of Transport
- (8) **ARNOLD WESKER**
Minister of Housing
- (9) **GWYN THOMAS**
Chancellor of the Exchequer
- (10) **NIGEL KNEALE**
Minister of Power



In the Footsteps of D. H. Lawrence

By MALCOLM BRADBURY

HAVE you been to Eastwood yet? You must, you really must. Everyone this year is doing the Lawrence pilgrimage. The B.B.C. Recording Van has been, and then there was the film company making *Sons and Lovers*, which paid all the Eastwood colliers a deprivation allowance because they took down all their television aerials for the location shots. In fact commerce out Nottingham way has never been better, and there are those who hold that nowadays it is the real node of the literary life.

I must warn you, though, if you are thinking of making the trip, that the apogee of Lawrence pilgrimage has already been reached in a by now quite well-worn essay by an Oxford don. I've made several visits to Eastwood but I've never been able to match the moment he describes when, sheltering in a doorway from the town's windy rains, he sees two small boys looking at him and hears one observe

"Who is that handsome, well-dressed stranger?"

Some little time ago a companion and myself did go to Eastwood to tread in the steps of the master. My companion, whose name was Michael Orsler, was an avid admirer of Lawrence. There are two schools of Lawrence admirers; one group thinks that he wrote novels about class and the other that he wrote novels about sex. Orsler, a lad of rural stock, belonged to the sexy school. "Sex rules the world," he used to shout loudly on buses; and old ladies would turn round and, disputing the philosophy, hit him on the head with umbrellas. "Why don't you sublimate, like everyone else?" I often used to ask him when we were at college together. Orsler only grew defiant. "Somehow," he'd say, "I just can't."

One day, therefore, we could have been seen, by any small boys interested in observing two handsome, well-

dressed strangers, getting off the Nottingham bus in the middle of Eastwood. Orsler was all fascination, all gape; I, on the other hand, was in a paroxysm of nervousness in case I should come across any friends who realized what I was doing. We Nottinghamshire people have always preserved a certain insouciance about Lawrence, and I had friends who would have cut me for life if they'd known what I was up to. Moreover I was only too well aware that Eastwood people had little respect for Lawrence (those, that is, who had heard of him), and when there had been some talk of naming a miner's social centre after him it had been quickly squashed; no one wants to play darts in a building named after a chap who wrote dirty books. I knew that Orsler, who did all he did in style, would want to interview the local residents about their memories, and we should be fortunate if we left the place in good order.

It was raining an icy rain, and in the doorway of the Co-op miners were spitting on the pavements. Orsler had the idea of accosting them and telling them how Lawrentian they were, but I quickly restrained him. We went into Victoria Street where, on fine days, thesis-writing Americans can be observed standing before the birthplace with their hats reverently off. Fortunately the dwelling, a redbrick terrace house with brown paintwork, did not detain Orsler unduly, and we were about to press on when Orsler observed that a man and a woman were standing in a doorway. I pretended we were looking for a public toilet; Orsler, with a pilgrim's daring, made as if to accost them. Fortunately they ducked quickly indoors and the moment was over. I felt Lawrence would have liked it.

I led Orsler on down to the Palmerston Arms, the pub down in the Bottoms, which is near to the house the

Lawrence family later took and which always has in it two or three old miners who are prepared to work up a recollection or two in exchange for a pint. It was a slack day, however, and the pub was empty. I then proposed we walk on to Hagg's Farm, the farm where "Miriam" lived. Unfortunately somewhere in the course of the walk my sense of direction deserted me and we ended up in a farmyard where a man was washing a pair of boots in soap and water under a pump. Orsler asked him some ill-phrased question, and he directed us to another farm in the middle of a marsh somewhere near Brindsley. When we reached the farm night was falling and the cold was biting deep into our ears. A college girl, home for the holidays, came to the door and told us that we had been misled. We were depressed; the cold was chewing at our ears and our shoes were full of water. "Never mind,"

said Orsler, "this one will do." He sweet-talked the girl into letting us look round, an experience not at all un-instructive. As Orsler said, this is something that most tourists miss, and Lawrence would have liked it.

Walking back down the lane into Brindsley, Orsler was all aglow from a sense of a duty well done. I allowed him his joy. Presently we were accosted on the road by an old man of some ninety years, walking with a stick. "Seen any owd men back there?" he croaked. We said that we had not. "Haha," cried the old man in high glee, "it's too cold for 'em." It was, as Orsler remarked, an experience to treasure, an experience that Lawrence would have liked. I grunted inaudibly; it was too cold for me, too.

From Brindsley we took the bus back to Eastwood (it was, as Orsler pointed out, the bus that Lawrence's father must have taken often from the



"Aye, but not a word to him about the possibility of the tourist trade hiving off to Holy Loch."



"Would you care to come in and wait? She's gone dancing."

pit to his home, except that he always walked) and we returned to the Palmerston Arms. Here the landlord introduced us to an old miner who had, he claimed, lived next door to the Lawrence family in the Breach. "I've got a bit of a cold," said the old miner, "so if I have owt, it'll be a rum, thank you." He was very informative on Lawrence, whom he insisted on calling W.H. He said the boys all used to call him Mardarse, because he played with the girls so much. He had another rum, and the recollections flowed apace, in proportion to the liquor. He knew all the places where Lawrence used "to do his bit of writing" and was quite prepared to show them to us if we cared to stay in the district. It was

interesting to observe how the recollections of this unlettered man supported the biography in all particulars, and we remarked on the point.

Other people began to intervene. It had been a tough winter, so they all had colds and were drinking rum. A dispute arose as to where Lawrence had gone when he left Eastwood. "T. H. Lawrence," said one man. "He went off to Arabia, and then he got killed falling off a motor bike." "He never went to Arabia," said the first miner. "How dost thou know?" asked another. "Well, I tell thee, I've read his biography, that's how I know," said the first miner.

The argument grew and we took the opportunity to fade silently away.

"Funny how they allus has colds when there's visitors," murmured the landlord as we slipped out of the door. As we passed the window we could still see, within, the bustle of dispute. I remarked to Orsler that Lawrence would have liked it. He didn't reply. We got on the bus back to Nottingham; and for all we know, the argument rages still, and no one has yet noticed the absence of the two handsome, well-dressed strangers who began it. I just hope, though, that they've all got rid of their colds by the time you go.

*I Wished
the Floor
Would Open*

V.E.-DAY. Caught in Greece, Squadron-Leader, R.A.F. Know-all explains only way to get out quick is stand for Parliament. Get leave and adopted Conservative candidate. Election declared. Go to constituency. No organization. Explained Conservative Party went to war. No sub-agents in villages. Must have sub-agents in villages. Only plan candidate go round villages asking people to become sub-agents. Explained this good plan as candidate gets to know people. It's a wise candidate that knows his own sub-agents. Don't know anybody in villages. Whom shall I call on? Helpful supporters suggest names. Everleigh big and important village. Who is there in Everleigh? Popular gentleman farmer Mr. Cave—should think he would do. Big house on right just outside village. Drive out and call on Mr. Cave. Mr. Cave out. Wife, friendly, says he will be back in evening. Call again evening. Mr. Cave very friendly but does not seem inclined to become sub-agent. Appeal to public spirit—eloquent speech on need for every man to do bit. Mr. Cave still friendly but still inclined. After third appeal Mr. Cave confesses just returned from meeting where selected as Labour candidate against me. Wait for floor to open. Floor not opening, Mr. Cave suggests no reason why we should not have drink. See no reason either. Have drink. Have another drink. Floor opens. — C.H.

Winter Draws On

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

WHEN the wind hits my house now a disconcerting thing happens: it snows porridge in the upper rooms. If it isn't actually porridge it's as near as makes no difference . . . fine particles of an oat-like substance, hesitating in the ceiling cracks and floating gently down; and there's plenty more where that came from: twelve man-high bags of the stuff, strewn in the rafters. I know, because I strewn it.

They say, the people who sell these bags, that every house loses one-sixth of its heat through the roof. I don't doubt them. And for anyone who can tell whether or not he's feeling one-sixth warmer than he was yesterday (assuming millibars and all those things unchanged) the trifling operation of trapping the wayward thermos on their way out, by shovelling this breakfast-food three inches deep between the joists, is obviously well worth while. It's just my bad luck that I happen to be more or less impervious to temperature variations of this modest order, and can combat even wider fluctuations, whether up or down, by a simple manipulation of extra waistcoats. It was because of this, I suppose, that the decision to go in for fragmented insulation was my wife's. Wives, as is well known, have closer affinities with Herr Fahrenheit, and on the whole have no middle course between turning blue at the extremities and suddenly throwing all the windows open. So my first intimation was on answering the door and seeing these twelve bags in the porch, crowded together for warmth, with a man's hand coming over the back waving a pink invoice. Wives, whatever their shortcomings when it comes to holding a constant temperature, know the value of a domestic *fait accompli*.

Other men's false roofs, I have no doubt, are stable, uncluttered, easy of access and comparatively unoccupied by birds. Mine isn't. Except for an arbitrarily sited island of stout planks in what I judge at random to be the north-west corner the place is ideal for tightrope practice; or it would be if

progress along the joists were not impeded every few feet by tea-chests full of old hats, bedroom chairs singing with worm, children's tricycles, hand-cranked film-projectors, gladstone bags bursting with old eiderdowns, gilt picture-frames, camp-beds folded solid with rust, and immense beehive-shaped structures of straw brought in at some pains by starlings. One false step,

which is easy, and you've got a leg through the bathroom ceiling. But at least this gives you the rare relief of straightening your back for a moment.

All this is assuming that you've got up there in the first place by leaping off a short pair of steps and hanging by your elbows. A sharp shove from below with bag number one may then help you into a position from which you can haul up the round dozen. Then all you have to do is spread the stuff—from time to time, as required, shifting tea-chests, chairs, tricycles, camp-beds and the rest; moving the candle-stub from rafter to rafter; replying noncommittally

THEN AS NOW

Tenniel drew Gladstone and Disraeli hundreds of times during his long career and somehow Gladstone always seemed to come out the handsomer



EXTRAORDINARY MILDNESS OF THE POLITICAL SEASON

MR. DISRAELI. "DELIGHTFUL 'SPEECH FROM THE THRONE'—
QUITE CHARMING!" &c., &c.
MR. GLADSTONE. "SO GLAD YOU LIKED IT—THE REPLIES TO THE
ADDRESS WERE ADMIRABLE!" &c., &c.

(February 27 1869)



to inquiries from below of whether you're all right; cracking your head on the wealth of beams; and wondering why the hell it is that bags which burst readily on the way up can't be induced to yield the necessary hole at the end from which the contents may be dug out dogwise and backwards during eighteen or twenty squatting progressions back and forth across the width of the housetop.

However, let's have no bitterness. I did it. It took a mere four hours. My back will never be the same. I still haven't got all the candle-grease out of my hair. The stuff isn't spread with complete evenness. Here and there it's a foot deep; elsewhere it's a mere sprinkling; in places there's more on the joists than between them; and where it's between them it's falling as snow when the high winds hit us. But the expression on a wife's face when she sees twelve full bags of insulation disappear up into the roof, and twelve empty ones, screwed up savagely, hurled down on to the landing is its own reward. I haven't bothered to explain that, owing to an inevitable miscalculation, we really needed six more bags, and one-third of the area

hasn't been done at all. For safety's sake I've covered this with the tea-chests and the chairs and the camp-beds, though I don't imagine that any actual inspection will take place.

In any case it's doubtful whether even wives, with their well-known thermodynamic sensibilities, can tell whether one-sixth of the heat has been stopped on its way out, or only two-thirds of one-sixth, whatever a

mathematician might make that out to be. All the same it's rather curious that on answering the door yesterday afternoon and peering through the light fall of indoor snow I saw what I at first took to be the Michelin man standing in the porch . . . Actually someone completely swathed in coils of rubber draught-excluder, holding out a pink invoice through a small air-hole in the middle.

Winged Chariot

SWIFTER and ever swifter
The seasons ebb and flow.
Like sugar from a sifter,
Or brandy from a snifter,
Time disappears; and O!
Supplies are running low.

Then let us, love, delay not;
The years are speeding by,
And months, like moments, stay not—
At least, the wise ones say not,
And, saying not, they sigh.
I do not think they lie.

If by my more than kisses
You think yourself disgraced,
And fear the sour world's hisses,
Leave me; become a Mrs.
But if you stay, make haste;
Time is not ours to waste.

You are of flesh, not suet;
Your veins run blood, not ink.
Do what you will, but do it—
Either go round or through it,
Don't linger on the brink;
Jump in with me, and sink.

— R. P. LISTER

Terms and Germs

RICHARD USBORNE reflects on the "San-filers" of 1919-1921

I SUPPOSE the influenza epidemic that hit my preparatory school in the Christmas term of 1919 was part of the big one that swept Europe and that you read about in books. I was at the beginning of my second year at the school then, and remember it only because so many boys were in the San that the remainder of us had to close in on the top three of the nine long tables in the Dining Hall.

For me, a "kid," it was odd to find myself coming so far into what seemed privileged Upper School territory. And, in reverse, it must have seemed *infra dig* for Parsons of the Fifth Form to have, at three meals a day, to make conversation with such utter nobodies as had been budged up from the kids' tables near the door.

I had never spoken socially to Parsons before. He played outside left for the First XI Football and, in the "Characters of the Eleven" in the School Magazine he got: "Fast and can kick with both feet. Must learn to drop back in defence." He distributed the letters at lunch on Tuesdays (Irish Stew). His boot-hole number was seventy-seven, and his parents came down to Sports Day in a pony-trap. He was four years my superior, and I was bemused by a lot of his superior conversation at table that term. His favourite phrase was "It's an absolute farce . . ." and I couldn't imagine what the word "farce" meant. Less painful, this, than when, again for reasons of 'flu casualties, the terrifying headmaster, with dog-collar, a loud sniff, a tobacco-stained moustache and crooked, tobacco-stained teeth, came and took an awkward squad of the Junior School in Livy. He picked on me first and told me to "construe." I'd never heard that word before either, and he got in a bate with me and sniffed and gobbled and turned to someone who *did* know the King's English (another baffling neologism).

Parsons said almost everything was an absolute farce, meal after meal, and somehow the term drew to a close. I

got 'flu in the Christmas holidays and by my mother's account was on the danger list for several days. I remember nothing of that either, except that I had a fire in my bedroom and that an unbelievably ancient aunt (I've checked dates. She was fifty) who was staying with us came and sat with me in an armchair through the nights, wore pince-nez and made a kind of whistling noise with her breathing. During periods of what I take to have been high temperatures, I had a wonderful sensation of floating above my bed. And ever since then when filling in medical forms for the Army or Insurances I have been able to put "Pleurisy" down. Dr. Brough said I had had pleurisy.

I got better, and then my mother and sister got 'flu. By the end of the holidays Aunt Emmy had gone and the rest of us were satisfactorily convalescent. Dr. Brough had given my mother a tonic which must have had a lot of glycerine in it. When she poured it out of the bottle into the glass she had to cut it off with scissors: otherwise it flowed back into the bottle. We got into a family laughing fit about it, and my mother said it probably did us all much more good than the tonic itself did her. Then Dr. Brough said that what the three of us needed was some sea air to blow the 'flu cobwebs away. We lived twelve miles from the coast. My mother hired the village taxi,



wrapped us up warm, and told the driver to head for the coast and drive us along it for a few miles before coming home. It rained all the way, and the taxi smelt of what I would have said, twenty years later, was Pool petrol. My sister and I were tremendously sick most of the drive, but I got back to school the right day and survived the whole Easter term without going to the San.

Early in the Easter holidays I got chicken-pox. By the end of the holidays Dr. Brough said I was clear of infection, and I went back for the Summer term with my health certificate duly signed, and duly put in my hand-bag with my pyjamas and Bible "for the first night." The School started getting chicken-pox

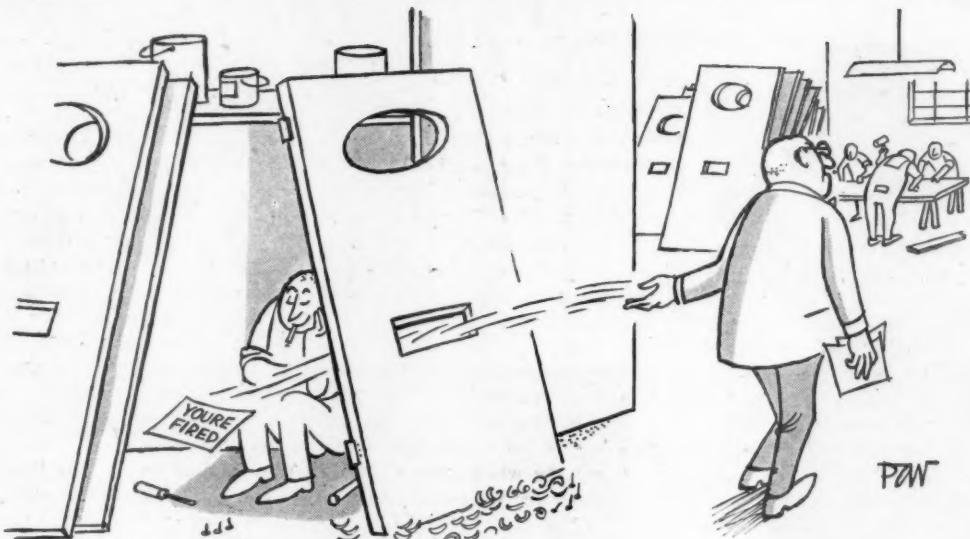
in a big way at an early date, and I was held to have been the carrier. "These country doctors . . ." "These tough-minded pensioner widows who don't want their boys to miss a day of the education they are paying for . . ." Such were the things (I think now) the matron and headmaster were saying about it over the staff fish-pie and shape in the French Room in the evenings. I was the accepted culprit, and scholarships were looming.

My preparatory school was hot stuff on scholarships to the public schools. "Cramming!" complained all the other prep schools. But year after year the Fifth Form all got scholarships somewhere, and the whole routine of the school was geared towards sending up

a dozen or more hopefuls, some to Eton, some to Harrow, some to Winchester, stuffed with Latin and Greek, Bible "contexts" and the "right" answers in History, to sit exams. In the first half of the Summer term the Head's "bate" quotient was very high, the Fifth brought their paradigms books in to meals and sat with their lips moving silently and one hand over the columns they were trying to memorize. (They always followed the New Testament Lessons in Chapel in Greek texts. Heavens, I can still remember, from my own last year, "βόσκε τὰ ἀρνία μοῦ" and "βόσκε τὰ πρόβατα μοῦ"). When the telegrams came and the scholarship results were in, the Top People relaxed and we got extra half-holidays, tea on



"Buy a statuette of Karl Marx, comrade?"



the lawn, hay feasts and fireworks. A boy who brought chicken-pox into the school at the beginning of the scholarship term was not the headmaster's favourite. He gave me dirty looks and sniffed. The matron gave me dirty looks and rattled her keys in a marked manner. The news got out to the boys. This was *my* chicken-pox epidemic. The San was crowded, and one flippant master differentiated the sufferers in categories, "spotties," "spottiores" and "spottissimi."

One Saturday evening in May Parsons spoke to me again, in the playing field. He hadn't got chicken-pox. Possibly he had had it before. But, he assured me, four boys in the Fifth couldn't sit their scholarship exams. "D'you realize that you've probably ruined their lives?"

This was a deadening thought. I hadn't known what a "farce" was, but I knew roughly what a "ruined life" was: drink, the Colonies, beach-combing, *Strand Magazine* stuff. What Parsons said got in amongst me and has weighed on my mind ever since, more or less. I don't remember who the four boys were whose lives I was due to ruin. But the new register of my prep school arrived the other day, and I've been looking things up. There were thirteen boys who got scholarships in 1920, I see: almost a record year, with something for everybody in the Fifth as usual, and two in the Under Fifth. Parsons himself got one at Eton, and is now a Public Relations Officer

at a Ministry. Three were killed in the war. I know several of the others. Two are ambassadors, and three have recently appeared in those board-room group photographs that we see in the City pages of *The Times*. I can't find any evidence of ruined lives among the 1920 "leavers." No addresses in Tampico. One in Australia, yes, but he's a meat-and-wool king, and he gave the School £1,000 for its Centenary Fund.

I must get in touch with Parsons and ask him. Or—and conceivably Old Boys of my prep school will have identified some of my descriptions and jargon—will any 1920-leaver whose life I ruined by giving him chicken-pox and cancelling his scholarship hopes, please let me know, c/o The Editor? I would like to say how sorry I am.

★

Another World Than Ours

"A police sentry had a nerve racking experience on Monday night.

About 10 p.m. police constable W. A. Gunaratna of the Mahara police station was on sentry duty at a lonely outpost. On one side was a mortuary and behind him a jungle.

Seeing a convict advancing menacingly towards him he quickly loaded his service rifle with five rounds of ammunition and opened fire at the advancing convict, once, twice, and after the third shot the convict was still advancing. The constable fell down senseless.

On hearing the report of a rifle Gunaratna's brother officers ran towards the sentry post where the shots were heard to see Gunaratna on the ground with his rifle. They carried him to the prison hospital and after first aid by the prison apothecary Mr. S. Panchalingam the man revived about 2 a.m. Gunaratna had mistaken a ghost for a convict."—*Ceylon Daily News*

Border Ballad Resung

ONCE, there's no land like Scotland,
"Tis the bravest, bonniest place,
The lads are guid and han'some,
And the lassies fu' of grace.

Their lochs, their hills, their bubbling
burns
Are beautiful to see,
And they love each sprig o' heather
From Cape Wrath to Brig o' Dee.

No, there's nay a bit o' Scotland
From the Helmsdale to the Clyde,
That does na' fill their fiery hearts
With fearfu' joy and pride.

They'll hear no word agin it,
They will dirk you to the hilt
If you scorn the bagpipes playing,
Or the wearing of the kilt.

Aye, there's no land like Scotland,
So it's hard to understand'
Why every Scotsman leaves it
Just as quickly as he can.

Envoi

The Campbells are coming, hurrah,
hurrah,
The Campbells are coming. They
came.
You'll find them in thousands all over
the world,
And nary a one at hame.

— VIRGINIA GRAHAM

FACE VALUE



Rt. Hon. Harold Macmillan, M.P.

**Would you have this man
as your stationmaster?**

As a last shot in their election campaign the Democrats circulated a poster portrait of Mr. Nixon captioned "Would you buy a car from this man?" This seems a dangerous precedent. We hope it doesn't catch on here.



Rt. Hon. Hugh Gaitskell, M.P.

**Would you join this man in "Abide
with Me"?**

Rt. Hon. Selwyn
Chancellor of the

*Would you like to be telling you the
that happened to the In*



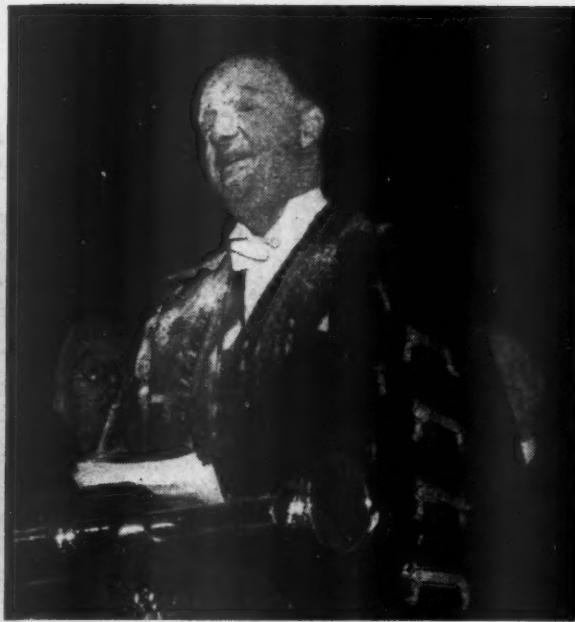
Rt. Hon. Ernest Marples, M.P., Minister of Transport

**Would you allow this man to look
after your Public Relations?**



Rt. Hon. Duncan Sandys, M.P., Secretary of State for
Commonwealth Relations

**Would you expect this man to be able
to tell the difference between black and
white?**



Rt. Hon. R. A. Butler, Home Secretary

Would you allow this man to white-wash your ceiling?



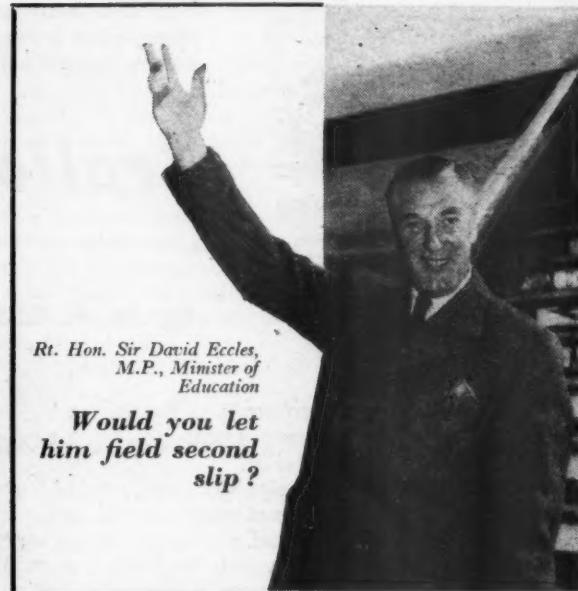
Mr. Michael Foot

Would you rely on this man's directions?



Rt. Hon. Harold Wilson,
M.P.

**Would you give
this man
a lift?**



Rt. Hon. Sir David Eccles,
M.P., Minister of
Education

**Would you let
him field second
slip?**



Mr. Joseph Grimond, M.P.

**Would you let him design
your lampshades?**



Mr. Frank Cousins

**Would you allow this
man?**

For the encouragement of SF writers, PUNCH suggests how their problems would have been handled by the great novelists



Trollope in Space

By H. F. ELLIS

THE LAST COUNT-DOWN AT BARCHESTER
CHAPTER LXXVII
Fire!

IT is not to be supposed that Mrs. Proudie looked forward with any keen expectation of enjoyment to the approaching journey. To tell the truth, she was exceedingly angry—angry with the bishop, angry with Dr. Fission for insisting that she submit herself to a course of preparation that might be necessary enough for a grocer or a minor canon but by no means befitted the wife of the Bishop of Barchester, angry above all with Archdeacon Grantly, though our old friend's offence had been no more grave than that of finding himself in the right place at the wrong time, a misfortune to which who among us that dare not claim immunity from the ordinary changes and chances of this mortal life will not confess himself to be at some time or another prone?

"Accustom myself to a feeling of weightlessness, Dr. Fission!" said Mrs. Proudie, when the good scientist had attempted to explain to her, not without some inward qualms of his own, what must be done by any, be he butcher or bishop, that desires to shake off terrestrial trappings and



"I'm conducting a survey to ascertain how charitable Londoners are."

venture among the stars. "This is not the manner in which I am accustomed to be addressed. Zero-gravity chamber, indeed!" And she shook an imperious finger in the poor man's face.

For myself, I cannot find it altogether in my heart to blame Mrs. Proudie for this show of indignation. Ladies are by nature disinclined towards exercises that disturb the elegance of posture and carriage learned at their mother's knee, and to Mrs. Proudie the maintenance of her wonted dignity and stance was a sacred trust. To be weightless! To submit to be rotated, as she well knew would be her portion—for her husband, we may be sure, did not conceal from the wife of his bosom his experiences before he set off upon that ill-fated trip to Mars which was the *fons et origo* of all her present troubles—to be whirled about, until a force of minus *g* was exerted upon her unwilling feet, until she literally did not know whether she was on her head or her heels! Such treatment was not to be borne. She would not submit to it!

Yet submit she did. Mrs. Proudie, for all her faults, did not lack courage. She had made up her mind that the bishop, wherever he now was, must be pursued, captured, restored to his senses and to his duties in the diocese. Yes, even if she had to go to Saturn or Jupiter to do it. If weightlessness were the price to be paid for the resumption of her old authority over him she would pay it! Her resolution may have been shaken, her determination momentarily weakened by her interview with Dr. Fission just recorded. But circumstances conspired to see that this fit of infirmity, if such it could be called in such a woman, was short-lived.

The bishop's prolonged absence on another planet had not, it may be imagined, gone unnoticed among the resident clergymen of the chapter. The opinion was by this time freely canvassed that he had no intention of returning, and it happened that a minor canon and a meagre little prebendary chanced to discuss this very point within the hearing of Mrs. Proudie as she made her solitary way back to the palace. Such coincidences are not unknown in the world, nor am I at all disposed to agree with those solemn critics who reprobate novelists for introducing them into their books. How, if he be denied the convenience of those chance meetings and occurrences that are the familiar accompaniments of his everyday life, is the poor novelist to compress his story within the narrow compass of three volumes? I am certain that the canon and the little prebendary did discuss the bishop's behaviour and that Mrs. Proudie

did overhear enough of their conversation to convince her that she must suffer weightlessness, initial velocities of 26,000 miles an hour, accelerations up to *five g* if necessary—anything rather than permit her lord and master to defy her an instant longer than could be avoided.

"Back?" said the minor canon. "Come back to Bar-
chester? He'll not do it, unless he is a bigger fool even than I take him for."

"But what can he do, so far from his diocese?" said the meagre prebendary. "There is no establishment as yet on Mars, I believe."

"Do!" exclaimed the canon. "Whatever he does or does not do it will be done without the interference of that woman. What more should the bishop ask of life than that?"

As Medea swore fearful vengeance upon the renegade Jason, so did Mrs. Proudie, when these terrible words fell upon her ears, swear that at any cost she would bring her husband back and make him pay dearly for the insults she had just now endured. I do not say that she was prepared to sacrifice her children to her wrath, as Medea did, but she was prepared to sacrifice herself. She could and would place herself without hesitation in the zero-gravity chamber.

Poor woman! Had she but known the undeserved blow that fate was about to deal her she might have turned back even at this eleventh hour from her resolve. But it is not given to us to peep into the future, and I have noticed that often, when we think we have faced the worst, some yet harder and unsuspected trial awaits us. How could she

guess, how should she have the means of knowing, that when she stepped with beating heart into the conditioning chamber she would find Archdeacon Grantly already in occupation?

If the reader is to understand how it came about that Dr. Grantly, a man whom we know to be wedded to his fields and foxes, to his claret and all the comforts of Plumstead Episcopi, was also preparing himself for interstellar travel, he must cast his mind back to the sudden disappearance of Eleanor Arabin, to the alarm and conjecture excited thereby, and to the discovery—after Mr. Toogood of Toogood and Crump had "rummaged about" in the manner described in an earlier chapter—that she had almost certainly left, if not exactly *with* the bishop, at any rate in the same space-vehicle. No word had been heard from her. Mr. Arabin had expressed his determination to seek his wife but such a proposal from a man not yet fully recovered from a severe dose of cosmic radiation encountered on a previous errand of mercy to Venus was not to be countenanced by his friends in Bar-
chester. The archdeacon should go instead! So it was settled and so it came about that Mrs. Proudie had no sooner heard the door of the zero-gravity chamber clang behind her than she was startled by an even more perturbing sound, the involuntary "Good heavens!" of Dr. Grantly.

There are sufferings too acute, agonies of the spirit too intense to be made the subject of the novelist's art. I had rather that my pen cease altogether from its office than that it should be employed to reveal the secrets of that sealed chamber, to describe how as the rotation of its walls increased

*"I know you've read it and I've
read it and I'm not denying
it's a great contribution to
English literature—all I'm saying
is that it's not the sort of
book I'd like my mother to read."*



in speed Archdeacon Grantly rose irresistibly into the air or how Mrs. Proudie, attempting to quell her old enemy with a "Pray be seated, sir!", forgot that the imperious gesture with which she accompanied her command would supply the initial velocity required to send her, too, into orbit. If the two had the misfortune actually to collide, if Mrs. Proudie (as some ill-natured people aver) turned a double somersault, and if Dr. Grantly, while standing on his head, gave vent to an exclamation that had never before soiled the lady's ears, I at least will not be guilty of confirming their mutual discomfiture. Mrs. Proudie's sins have been neither light nor few, but I think that her worst enemy would have spared her, if he could, the embarrassments of that meeting.

The limits of my third volume, as the attentive reader has not failed to observe, are rapidly approaching. By hook or crook, within the space of a page or two at most I must dispose of all those old friends with whose comings and goings, their loves and hates, their strivings and journeyings on this earth and beyond, I have so long and so deeply been engaged. From novelist and reader alike the imminence of such final partings cannot be concealed. Archdeacon Grantly, however, was less favourably placed. When the time came for him to take his seat in the spaceship that left Hogglestock for Mars every Wednesday he was prepared to find a fellow traveller in Mrs. Proudie, but it was a surprise to him to see Mr. and Miss Thorne of Ullathorne, Mr. Robarts, Lady Lufton, Lily Dale, Dr. Tempest, Charlotte Stanhope and the Duke of Omnium quietly adjusting their take-off straps and to catch a glimpse through the ozone-tight doors of the second-class compartment of Mr. Toogood and

Mr. and Mrs. Crawley. "Good heavens!" he said aloud. "We are to be quite a party, it seems."

"You surely did not suppose," said Lady Lufton, smiling at him, "that your old friends would allow you to set off alone on so lengthy and perhaps arduous a journey?"

It was thoughtless in her, I confess, to speak so in the presence of Mrs. Proudie, who had no friends to support her on a journey that, far from being shorter or less arduous, was precisely the same. But we do not always choose our words as carefully as we ought, particularly when we are just about to experience the thrust of a Stage I rocket.

This little awkwardness was soon overcome by the voice of Johnny Eames from the Control Tower, announcing "Ten!", upon which everyone began to make those little preparations for departure with which men and women are accustomed to conceal their momentary nervousness.

"Eight!" said Johnny Eames.

"Won't be long now," said the archdeacon, smoothing his knees.

"Six!" said Johnny.

"Peradventure," said Mr. Crawley, putting his head through the communicating door, "it is unbecoming in me to intrude thus upon the privacy of those upon whom superiority in wordly possessions, if in naught else, has conferred the privilege—"

"Five!" said Johnny.

"—of a chamber more spacious and withal more richly appointed than the hovel within which Mrs. Crawley and myself, together with Mr. Toogood of whose kindness, whether misconceived or not, I cannot but—"

"Four!" said Johnny.

"—be sensible are at present confined. But it is now a plurality of years since I have enjoyed commerce with extra-terrestrial engines or had cause to refresh my memory of the due procedure thereanent—"

"Three!" said Johnny.

"—and, though not altogether unversed, so far as my understanding permits, in mathematical series and their application, under God's guidance, to the problems of interplanetary flight, I would fain—"

"Two!" said Johnny.

"I would fain," repeated Mr. Crawley, raising his voice, "be of your kindness apprised, if there be any here among you that hath knowledge of these matters and will so burden himself on my behoof—"

"One!" said Johnny.

"I would fain," said Mr. Crawley for the third time, "learn to what end the cardinal numbers are thus rehearsed before us in a manner contrary to the appointed order wherein Pythagoras, yea, and if memory stumble not—"

"Fire!" said Johnny Eames, thus simultaneously answering Mr. Crawley's question and bringing this story to a conclusion that will, I earnestly hope, prove satisfactory to all my readers.



"I hear Brother Ignatius is leaving us."

Coming:

RUDYARD KIPLING

CONAN DOYLE

JOHN GALSWORTHY

JAMES JOYCE

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

D. H. LAWRENCE

I Was Bribed!

An Old Soccer Man Remembers

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

IT is more than twenty years since I hung up my football boots, as they say, for the last time. To be strictly accurate I did not so much hang them up as push them out of sight beneath a mound of foul cattle-bedding in the loft of a barn. That was where I stowed my kit, boots, shirt, shorts and stockings after every match. Under the aged straw. And I did so because my mother would not have the stuff in the house and refused point-blank to have anything to do with its laundering. I didn't hold it against her.

I played for a team of schoolmasters in the Midlands, and our ground was a stretch of rough grazing on the outskirts of the Potteries. We paid the farmer five pounds a year (I think*) to remove his sheep from the pitch every Saturday morning and for the use of his loft and ladder. Nobody could blame my mother for her refusal to harbour my strip, for it was not by any means a thing of beauty. To be blunt it was rather high. The shirt was a festering mass of cotton and sweat, the shorts were corrugations of caked mud and made a black cracking noise as I trotted in them, the boots were indescribable, and the stockings, when prised apart and forced into some semblance of hosiery, were matted tubes of dried sump-oil.

My position was centre-forward, and for years, carrying with me an odour of decay, I weaved my way through half-backs and backs without fully realizing the truth of my untouchability. In retrospect though, I can almost *feel* the full-backs veering away after promising a heavy tackle. I got several goals during my career.

There was nothing fancy about our tactics. In those days such exotic attacking formations as Real Madrid's 4-2-4 and Juventus's 2-2-6 were unheard of: the conventional line-up was that borrowed from French

*I don't want to be too precise: I was club treasurer for a few years.

grammars, the preferential arrangement of pronominal objects—

me	te	se	nous	vous
le	la	les		
lui	leur			
y				
en				

—but this was usually well beyond our resources. Never mind about "en" (linesman), we counted ourselves fantastically lucky to be able to field as many as nine men. It followed that our plan was based exclusively on defence. To-day it would be called, I suppose, the 8-1 system. We had eight or so schoolmasters hovering round our penalty area and one man (me) standing in splendid, offensive, fetid isolation in the centre circle. My job, as I saw it, was to remain there, hands on hips, yelling abuse at the dauntless defenders and urging them continually to "Bang it up!" They seldom did so.

There were no nets to our goal-posts and the ground was only sketchily marked out in a thin scatter of wind-blown sawdust dating from the first game of the season, so it was never easy for visiting teams (we never seemed to play away) to claim much success from their great efforts in our goalmouth. Two or three times in every match play was held up while fierce but academic arguments took place:

"Goal!"

"It was outside by a mile!"

"But it went in just under the crossbar." (Their centre-forward.)

"Sorry, it was well over the top." (Our full-backs and halves, in unison.)

"Come off it!"

"We'll give you a corner if you feel strongly about it."

"It was a perfectly good goal. Play the —— game!"

Our goalkeeper would be hanging from the crossbar during these exchanges, trying to demonstrate that the claimed goal could have been nothing more substantial than an optical illusion. Our right-half, a science master at the



"'Lady Chatterley's Lover'? Listen, mate, if that's the book that's so pure and decent it's even fit for schoolgirls to read then we don't stock it."

local grammar and a man of presence and deceptive dignity, usually had the last word.

"Now, wait a minute," he would say, with arms raised high. "It couldn't possibly have gone in. The angle of the shot, as I saw it, was at least forty-five, which from the shooting position would take it at least two feet over the bar. Bad luck; let's get on with the game."

And we would get our goal-kick.

The game suffered too from the absence of referee and linesmen. Sometimes a dribbling encounter between two players would assume the nature of a private feud and their ridiculous feints, swerves and shufflings (à la Matthews) would take them well out of the field of play. The rest of us, sweating and panting, would watch them without interest, grateful for the rest, as they moved away locked in footling combat fifty or more yards beyond the nominal touchline. Once, I recall, a couple of fanatical dribblers lost touch with the rest of us so completely that they were across a ploughing baulk and into a field of young alfalfa before they came to their senses.

We were totally unlike other sides in our general deportment. No one ever saw us rush madly to hug and kiss a goal-scorer in a congratulatory embrace. We eschewed such nonsense, I dare

say, because our plan of campaign did not really make provision for the scoring of goals by our side, and when the unlikely did occur we were all so taken aback that the moment of passion was over and done with before we could take action. For us congratulations of the sort seen regularly at White Hart Lane would have been as absurd as a \times in a postscript to a letter from the Inland Revenue. There was also the fact that our 8-1 system left the goal-scoring to one man and one alone, and that man, as I have already intimated, did not exactly invite an enthusiastic mobbing at close quarters.

Nor did we resort to fisticuffs as modern footballers do at the slightest

provocation. Occasionally, because habits acquired at school die hard, we would shout such advice as "Foul, ref!" "Offside, ref!" or "Chuck 'im off, ref!" but such appeals were immediately followed by a blush of contrition as we reflected that there was in fact no referee on the field. I remember only one genuinely ugly scene, and that was when a perfervid but blundering left-half (a middle-aged and spreading history master) floored an opponent just as a throw-in was about to be taken. What happened was obvious enough to our side. The history master's reactions were slow and he knew it; therefore he had timed his sprint upfield with the idea of

arriving on the scene at the exact moment of the throw. He picked his man and came in to charge, and once committed to this plan nothing could possibly stay its execution. The fixed opponent went down like one pole-axed and all hell broke loose. In our records the game was entered as "Draw (unfinished)," though at the time of the disaster we were in arrears 0-6.

Needless to say we had no spectators at our matches. If anyone had taken the trouble to cross a mile or so of trackless marsh to see us perform he would of course have been recruited instantly as player, referee, trainer or scorer. And anyway I cannot claim that a crowd would have made much of our futile gambolling. One snag from an audience-participation point of view was that we always seemed to play against teams which wore the same colours as ours—whitish shirts and dark shorts. The result inevitably was chaotic, though from time to time passes that would otherwise have gone astray were steered accidentally—through failure to identify—to the right man.

And now, after this lengthy preamble, I have forgotten what I set out to say . . . Oh, yes, I know. Somebody the other day was asking whether during my long years in soccer I had ever been bribed. Well, the answer is yes. A snooty inside-right (Sixth form classics) once offered to take my strip home and get it washed. At his own expense.

Naturally I refused. It would have dealt a death-blow at the efficiency of the team. It would have meant losing my place as centre-forward. No, until I finally hung up my boots I continued to walk alone. As the centre-half and captain used to say without exactly patting me on the back—"That shirt of yours, Hollowood, is worth ten men." But obviously he was exaggerating.



"If he'd only teach us something useful!"

"Exhibits of R— & Sons Ltd., a firm associated with ETA S.A., Grenchen, Switzerland, included the latest models of battery-operated clocks. The clocks claim the manufacturers consume less than 1300 milliamper-hours per year operating in working-temperatures between -20°C to $+65^{\circ}\text{C}$ from a 1.5V supply."—*Electronics Weekly*

Must be cuckoo.



Our Man in America

P. G. WODEHOUSE brings another bag of exclusives

DON'T ask me how it happened, for if there is one subject I am shaky on more than another it is the technical side of television, but the other night some electrons, or whatever you call them, got mixed up and blended a quiz soundtrack with pictures of Bob Hope doing a monologue.

Confusion, they tell me, was what is known as rife, and everyone is saying how fortunate it is that something of the sort did not occur during the Nixon-Kennedy debates. As one commentator has pointed out, it would never have done if a Western had suddenly tuned in and we had heard Mr. Nixon saying "Ah've bin farmin' this territory for eight summers now and no gun-toting dude teamed up with any Texas sidewinder's gonna run me off without a fight, no, sirree," while Mr. Kennedy

urged the advisability of taking Fizzo for fast, fast, fast relief of all internal pains, aches and disorders of the gastric juices.

Different, of course, if the interruption had involved, as in the other case, Bob Hope. An occasional touch of Bob Hope was what we all felt those debates needed.

One thing that distinguishes East Gilead, Idaho, from such centres as London, Paris and New York is the absence from its daily life of anything in the nature of excitement. Once in East Gilead you jog along as a rule placidly, and about the only inhabitant anything sensational has ever happened to is Mrs. Irwin S. Watson, whose ganglions are still vibrating as the result of what took place the last time

she went with the children to see their grandmother, who lives some little distance from the town.

Generally when Mrs. Watson takes her children, ten in number, to see their grandmother she counts noses before starting on the homeward journey, but this time, being in a hurry, she omitted this precaution and they were well on their way when her eldest daughter—Lana Marilyn, not that it matters—announced that Marty, aged three, was missing. At the same moment a woman in a car came by, waving vigorously and shouting something that Mrs. Watson did not catch.

Assuming this to be some friend or acquaintance, though she did not recognize the face, she waved cheerily back, turned the car and began to drive to the grandmother's to pick up Marty,



"They could have done with a bit more sulphate of ammonia."

and she had not gone far when the woman appeared again. This time she was screaming, and what was causing her emotion was the fact that Marty was on the front bumper of the Watson car. A bumper crop as one might say.

"Just as well you told me," said Mrs. Watson as she scooped him off and added him to the strength. "If I'd lost him that would have started his father off on another of his imaginary complaints."

Other children besides Marty are in the news this week. A mother has written to my daily paper asking for advice on how to correct her two-year-old daughter's eating habits. Apparently Elizabeth Debby, for such is her name, will persist in swallowing wood. Offer her the finest cut off the joint and she turns away, preferring to keep her strength up with toys, pens, pencils, toothpicks, golf clubs if not steel-shafted, and furniture—in fact anything with that delicious locked-in wooden goodness. Everything that even tastes like wood is grist to her mill.

The mother, understandably upset, wants to know if by any chance she has given birth to a termite, but one sees no real cause for anxiety. Obviously the child realizes that sooner or later she will come up against American breakfast cereals and she wants to get into training.

Two citizens who would have done well to imitate this child's eating habits are Kenneth J. Hall and his brother George of Massapequa, N.Y., who, feeling a little peckish one night, broke into the Youth Club in Massapequa Park and stole a thirty-pound turkey which was supposed to be the main course for two hundred parents and children at a Saturday night testimonial dinner. They ate most of the bird on the premises and finished it off in the car going home, and where they made their mistake was in throwing bones out of the window, for this enabled Detectives David See and William Lucas to trail them to their lair where they were lying on beds looking like something out of one of those silent motion-picture orgy scenes.

Haled before the awful majesty of Justice at Minneola District Court they pleaded guilty, and Judge Frederick Dempsey, before passing sentence, asked them if they had anything to say. Both had. Speaking as one dyspeptic, they said that if His Honour happened to have a little bicarbonate of soda on him they would be glad of it.

Slimming is so much the craze in America nowadays that it came as a surprise to see someone described in the paper as a heavy forger. But the picture conjured up of a Jim the Penman who, like Kenneth Hall and his

brother George, had foolishly neglected to watch his calories underwent alteration when the Government's latest publication, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, appeared and we learned that, so far from being an obese expert who specialized in writing cheques on other people's accounts, a heavy forger is simply the son of toil who operates a heavy forging press.

Similarly, a frog-shoveller, instead of being someone on whom the R.S.P.C.A. have been keeping their eye for a long time, is merely the chap who removes dirt and bark from log-chute frogs, "the junction point of two branches of a chute used in the logging industry." And a sausage roper does not lasso sausages, shouting "Yippee!" but just measures them off and knots them at the required length. Takes all the colour out of life, a book like The Directory of Occupational Titles.



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No. 6

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* Committee for Action of Some Sort at Any Cost

Misleading Cases

“Fair” Comment? Critic Incarcerated

By A.P.H.

The Queen against Quirk

AT the Old Bailey to-day Mr. Justice Ploon, the latest addition to the Queen's Bench, summing up to the jury, said:

This is the first time I have seen a dramatic critic in the dock—though it may not, I fancy, be the last. I asked the prosecuting counsel, Sir Adrian Floss, why the aggrieved persons had not taken the ordinary course of a civil action for damages for defamation. He replied, as you heard: “My lord, the newspaper in which the words complained of occurred is, without doubt, insured against the results of suits for defamation, and the man Quirk would not be allowed to suffer. The author and manager of the play in question feel that he ought to suffer. It is not possible to insure against the consequences of crime; and, to be frank, we hope that he will be found guilty and sent to gaol. Moreover, the words and circumstances of the libel in this case are exceptionally likely to provoke a breach of the peace, which is the main justification for criminal proceedings.” This, I must say, seems reasonable to me.

Now, it is common ground that the play *Queen Rat* was not a shining success. Few critics praised it, and many were hostile, as they are entitled to be. Most, however, expressed their disapproval in moderate and careful language. None ventured to say, as one critic did not long ago: “If this play is still being performed next Monday I shall return and abuse it again.” But Mr. Quirk wrote:

“An onset of nausea prevented me from seeing more than the first half of ‘Queen Rat’ . . .”

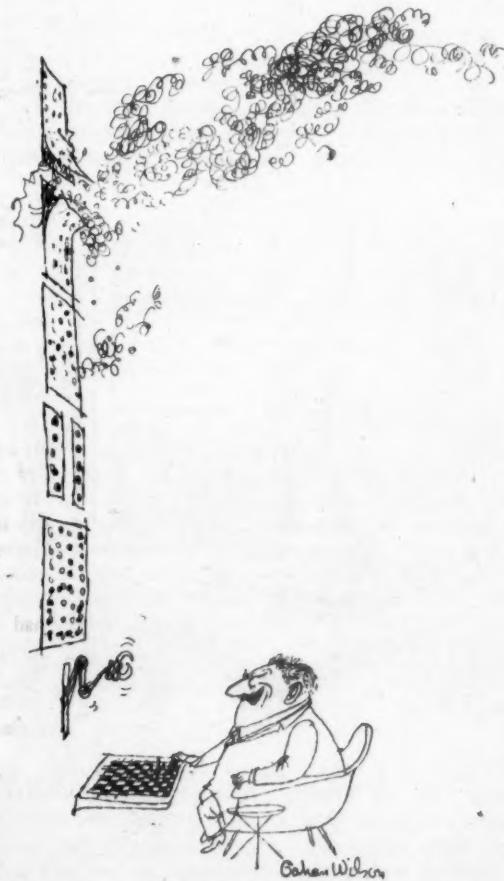
and after the first act, as he has admitted, he left the theatre.

I have already held that these words are capable of a defamatory meaning, for, according to the dictionary, “nausea” means “a feeling of sickness, with loathing of food, and an inclination to vomit.” The accused does not claim that his condition was due to any stomachic or abdominal disturbance: indeed he could hardly do that, for the evidence is that, having left the theatre, he ate a very good dinner. No, the “onset of nausea” was caused, metaphorically, by his seeing and hearing the first act of this play. Few more damaging things could be said about a dramatic work.

I must now inform you that in criminal proceedings for libel, where a statement of fact is in question, it is not enough to show that the statement was true: it must be proved that the publication was “for the public benefit.” Here, as we have seen, the assertion of nausea was not true, in substance and in fact: nor, you may think, if it had been true would it have contributed much to the public benefit. According to the evidence a new but small class of critics has appeared who, somewhat exaggerating their own importance, like to make a parade of their personal sensations: “I wanted to scream,” says one; “I felt like sleep,” says another; “I gnashed my teeth,” “I could hardly sit still,” “I closed my eyes,” “I suffered from indigestion.” You may well think,

as I do, that the physical state of a critic, unless put forward as an excuse for folly or rudeness, is not a matter of the slightest public interest.

I pass to the main, and famous, defence of “fair comment”: and I shall begin with the most difficult of the many questions which I see sparkling in those innocent eyes—“What exactly is meant by *fair comment*?” This has been the subject of engaging and profitable dispute among jurists, judges, and members of the Bar for at least one hundred years. “Fair comment,” properly interpreted, is a grand ingredient of our justly boasted political freedom. It is not the privilege of a few but the right of all to comment loudly on “matters of public interest,” meaning the affairs of Parliament, the public conduct of Ministers and Councillors and public servants, and even, within limits, the administration of justice, and so



“I thought you'd be a poor loser!”

on. But this original freedom was extended to cover comment upon works of art or literature or music, exposed to the public and thus, it is said, "submitted to criticism." These, it is true, are "matters of public interest," but not to the same extent as the conduct of the nation's rulers. A work of art, however disappointing, can seldom do so much damage as the foolish speech or wrong decision of a Minister. Moreover, the production of a satisfactory play is an enterprise much more difficult and dubious than the formulation of political policy. Unhappily, many distinguished jurists, misled by a false equation, have spoken as if "fair comment," in both departments of life, meant exactly the same. Respected judges have said that "fair" does not mean what the ordinary citizen would consider to be "fair." Words which to you or me would appear to be unreasonably or unnecessarily offensive, violent, extravagant, exaggerated, not far from mere invective or abuse, may still, according to these authorities, be "fair comment" if the opinions, however expressed, are "honest," that is, not inspired or swollen by "malice." Such a doctrine may well be accepted in certain forms of political comment. A simple, angry, but honest citizen who cries "Murderer!" from the back of the hall when the Prime Minister defends the nuclear deterrent will probably be excused in the unlikely event of an action for slander. But a dramatic critic, writing in cold blood and, by the way, for money, must surely be judged by different standards. It seems to me to be nonsense to say that any insult he cares to use is "fair," provided that it is "honest." "Fairness" and "honesty" are different qualities and do not necessarily travel together. I might most "honestly" dislike Mr. Quirk and regard him as a public pest. But if I walked across the Court



"All I can say is, thank heaven New Year's Eve, St. Valentine's Day, our wedding anniversary, Easter, Whitsun, the children's birthdays, your mother's birthday, your father's birthday, their anniversary, August Bank Holiday, your sister's birthday and wedding anniversary, my mother's and father's birthdays and wedding anniversary and Christmas come but once a year."

and punched him on the nose the blow would hardly be considered "fair." I should, if necessary, be willing to defy the authorities of the past, risk the rebukes of the Court of Appeal or House of Lords, and say that in relation to a work of art "fair comment" means comment that a jury would consider fair, whether honestly conceived or not: and I could pursue this line of thought for many days.

But in this case, I believe, I may be able to spare you from tiresome mental toil by shifting your attention from the words of the defendant to his deeds. He left the theatre after the first act, dined enjoyably while the second act was being performed and thereafter wrote and published more than a hundred words in terse but cruel condemnation of the whole. Nor, according to one witness, was it the first time that this particular critic has behaved in this manner, and publicly, even arrogantly, confessed it. Such conduct may be forgiven in the critic of an egg, where the lower half is unlikely to amend substantially an unfavourable verdict pronounced upon the upper. But a play is a very different affair. The first act may deliberately create an unpleasant effect or atmosphere which is to be cunningly corrected or dispersed in the second and third; just as a musical composer may resolve a whole series of hideous dissonances into a final, noble, soul-satisfying chord. For all he knew, for all we know now, his inclination to vomit would have been abated by the final curtain. How, when Quirk left the building, can he have been sure that this was not the purpose of the dramatist? Even if he did impute to himself such supernatural powers, what right had he to abandon his place of duty? No man is compelled to be a professional dramatic critic; but, having accepted the office, he enjoys certain privileges and may, you think, have certain obligations. He is paid by his newspaper to write just and careful accounts of the new plays. Accepting him, on his credentials from the newspaper, as a fit and proper person, the theatre provides him with a free seat—sometimes two—which might otherwise have been sold. He is not bound thereby to praise the piece, but he may be expected to behave with reasonable courtesy. If through an onset of nausea, neuralgia, headache, stomach-ache, or sheer intellectual distaste he finds it impossible to return to his place after the first interval, his proper course, you may think, is to make no comment on the piece at all, for in the circumstances no comment can be "fair." No judge, no jury, may go out in the middle. What, I wonder, would the defendant have said if after the case for the prosecution was closed you and I had said "So far, this case seems dreary and disgusting. Let us go out and have a drink. And then, without hearing the case for the defence, we will find the prisoner guilty." He would hardly, I think, have agreed that that was a "fair" trial. Pray consider your verdict.

The jury found the prisoner guilty, and Quirk was sent to prison for twelve months.



"7.30 What Do You Know?
8.00 Where Are You Now?
8.30 Any Answers?
9.00 Does The Team Think?"
BBC Light Programme

9.30 What's on the Telly?

Essence of Parliament

ANOTHER of those tantalizing iceberg weeks when most of the things that really mattered were happening out of sight. Hyde Park is not the only place that is going underground these days. The Queen's speech—for the first time filmed in colour—ran true, generally, to the prophecies. The Lords' debate on it was exceptionally gentlemanly even for lords—jokes about dukes from the scantily inhabited Socialist benches—and an excellently urbane after-dinner speech (delivered at tea-time) by Lord Hailsham, proposing the health of the mover and seconder of the Address. He congratulated the Duke of Atholl on possessing "the only private army outside the Congo." In the Commons the task of moving the Address had been entrusted to Mr. Maurice Macmillan, the Prime Minister's son. *Ils sont partout*, these Macmillans—and the Speaker, pardonably in difficulty at having to distinguish one from another, called not Mr. Maurice but Mr. Malcolm Macmillan. Mr. Malcolm Macmillan is the Socialist Member for the Western Isles and, if he had chosen to stand on his rights, once he had been called no Parliamentary power, I imagine, could have prevented him from seizing the floor of the House and upsetting all the apple-carts that there were. However, they don't do things like that in the Hebrides, and Mr. Maurice Macmillan got his innings all right and made the best of it as "the back-bench member of the family." He made a plea for a number of things, but above all for a more vigorous policy towards Europe. "Europe, or Little by Little" had been our progress so far.

These can hardly be very comfortable days for Mr. Gaitskell, but at any rate he is a much better hand at giving an appearance of being "at ease in Zion" than are most of his colleagues, and while they looked self-consciously down their noses with faces of doom he made some excellently urbane jokes about the Macmillan family connections as if he had no care in the world, whether in front of him or behind him, to the right of him or to the left of him. The Prime Minister, whether out of generosity or out of policy, was determined not to rub salt into the self-inflicted Socialist wounds. He had a more serious task and spoke sombrely of the world situation. He reported on the agreement to allow the American Polaris submarines to have a base—or a sort of base—in the inappropriately named Holy Loch in Scotland, and apparently did not get the details of the agreement quite right. For Lord Home had to do some explaining away the next day in the Lords. The debate on the Address—particularly that on the first day—is always rather a ragged affair. For there is no concrete question, no division, and each Member speaks on whatever topic is to his fancy. The debate oscillates uncontrollably from sealing-wax to pigs and from cabbages to kings, and few remain to hear it except those who are anxious that the speaker should sit down so that they may get up. One sometimes wonders why any remain

to hear it at all, and is inclined to murmur with Beatrice "I wonder you will still be talking, Signor Benedick. Nobody marks you." Brigadier Prior Palmer was worried about the West German talk on Oder-Neisse revision. Mr. Biggs Davison and Mr. Wedgwood Benn crossed such swords as there were about the meaning of partnership in Africa.

The only real question of these early days of the debate was whether Mr. Harold Wilson could strengthen his position by an outstanding speech when he opened the debate on Wednesday. His colleagues hardly gave him the chance, for most of them did not come to hear him, and anyway I doubt if the speech did him any great good. It was fluent enough but he evaded his difficulties by a general rhetoric of denunciation. A young journalist once applied for a job to John Morley in the old *Pall Mall Gazette* days. "What can you do?" asked Morley. "I can denounce," said the young man. "Denounce anything in particular?" asked Morley. "No, just general denunciation," said the young man. Mr. Harold Wilson is still a young journalist. His invective was, it is true, against the Tories rather than against his own party. The Prime Minister's nepotism would have "brought a blush to the cheeks of a Borgia Pope." It was a good enough crack, and even Mr. Gaitskell, who sat through all the rest of the speech with folded arms and expressionless face, permitted himself a withering smile. But I doubt if it won any votes either for the Socialist party or for Mr. Wilson's personal poll. For, though Parliamentarians get excited about "Who's in, who's out?" the electorate cares very little who holds the jobs—whether they are second cousins of the Prime Minister or not. It is as much as the public mind can do to retain the name of the Prime Minister, and few other names are known to it.

On Thursday the House was supposed to debate Commonwealth affairs. When it at last came to the debate Mr. Sandys read a long, unexceptionable, non-committal speech. Mr.

Callaghan replied with some vigorous stuff about the Colonial Development Corporation, but he had to speak with almost empty benches behind him. The real fun of the day had been in the hour and a quarter of points of order that preceded the debate. The figures had not at that time been announced, but it was an open secret that Mr. Gaitskell had won fairly easily. The anti-nuclear Socialists had put down amendments to the Queen's speech about defence and Holy Loch. Mr. Gaitskell, who for obvious reasons had no wish that there should be at the moment a division in the House on defence, had refused to put his name to these amendments and therefore the Speaker, who officially knew nothing of

divisions in the Socialist party, proposed to call the official Socialist amendment on the comparatively innocuous subject of rents. The unilateralists rallied round in force to request the calling of the defence amendments. The multilateralists sat a little sheepishly silent. Mr. Shinwell cooed. The Speaker purred. Mr. Butler chuckled. Mr. Silverman and Mr. Emrys Hughes raised points of order at length, and we saw the first trial of strength of the opposition to the opposition.

— PERCY SOMERSET

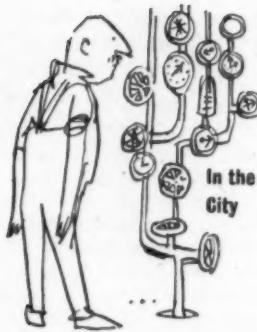


"Commonwealth-American Current Affairs Unit: Mr. S. J. Egerton-Banks on 'Early British Saints and German Baroque,' Concord House, 11, Charles Street, 8." *The Times*

Anything on Commonwealth-American Current Affairs?



MR. JO GRIMOND



Giantism

A PASSION for bigness is sweeping over the British economy. "The bigger they are, the heavier they fall" is an old saying of the boxing ring—alas, one which is disproved more often than not. In industrial and business organization there is virtue in size and strength.

Let us take as two examples of this trend towards concentration, the plans which have recently been announced to merge two world-famous textile firms, J. & P. Coats and Patons & Baldwins, and the two great stars of the property world, Mr. Jack Cotton's City Centre Properties and Mr. Charles Clore's City & Central Investments. These will make giants, judged by any present-day standards.

The textile marriage is a willing one. There is here no hint of a reluctant takeover. The boards of both companies are convinced that there will be worthwhile advantages in a merger between them. It now remains to find a mutually acceptable financial basis. In this search the well-known merchant bankers, Messrs. Morgan Grenfell & Co., are acting for both sides—another indication of the friendly atmosphere in which this project has been conceived and the discussions conducted.

The likely method will be to create a holding company which will take up the shares of the two existing companies. The final say in this matter will have to come from the shareholders themselves but they are likely to approve of the general proposal.

This project for a mixture of cotton and synthetic sewing threads on the one hand and the manufacture of worsted, woollens and synthetic yarns on the other, has much to be said for it. The holding company technique will allow each group to retain its identity and the considerable goodwill attaching to it. On the other hand the shareholders who will in future have shares in the holding company will find greater stability than they have had in the past since experience and history have shown

that the cycles of the cotton and woollen industries do not by any means coincide.

The property merger is likely to follow the same pattern of a holding company allowing the separate identities of the two groups to remain intact. The Cotton-Clore link-up will probably create the biggest property company of its kind in the world. This is a deal which ultimately will involve even bigger sums than the proposed textile alliance. This is because in the world of property, operators such as these have at their disposal the lush resources of large insurance companies. Mr. Clore has behind him the millions of the Prudential. Mr. Cotton, hardly to be outdone, can boast the backing of the Pearl and Legal & General, of the I.C.I. Pension Fund and a few other wielders of millions.

This formidable combination has been

trying out its strength even before the marriage has been consummated. Reinforced, theatrically rather than financially, by a third partner, the impresario Mr. Bernard Delfont, it has made a bid for Moss' Empires. This was the opening of a battle against Mr. Littler, that Prince of impresarios, whose company, Stoll Theatres, had previously bid for Moss' Empires in which it already has a considerable interest.

This was not a battle for the control of footlights in London and the provinces; rather was it concerned with an assessment of property values on which Messrs. Clore and Cotton have very shrewd ideas.

Now Mr. Prince Littler has claimed to have acquired a voting control of Moss' Empires, though Mr. Clore has challenged his claim.

— LOMBARD LANE



Apples in Store

WHATEVER the shortcomings of the past summer it has, indirectly, pleased at least one minority group—the "apple gourmets." This year's crop has been a bumper one both in yield and quality, and while other top fruit has cropped badly this is of little importance to your true apple lover, who regards cherries, plums, and pears as so much roughage to fill in the awful gap between the last of one year's crop and the first of the next.

April, May and June are barren months when, rather than go without apples altogether, we are forced to buy imported fruit, tasting like damp cotton wool packed into red plastic skins. July brings the first relief in the shape of the small but tasty Beauty of Bath, followed quickly in August by the Worcester Permain. These are nothing more than appetizers, however. It is in September and October that the "real" apples ripen; varieties like Millers Seedling, orange yellow like autumn sunshine, with flesh that turns to sparkling froth in the mouth. It does not keep and even the pressure

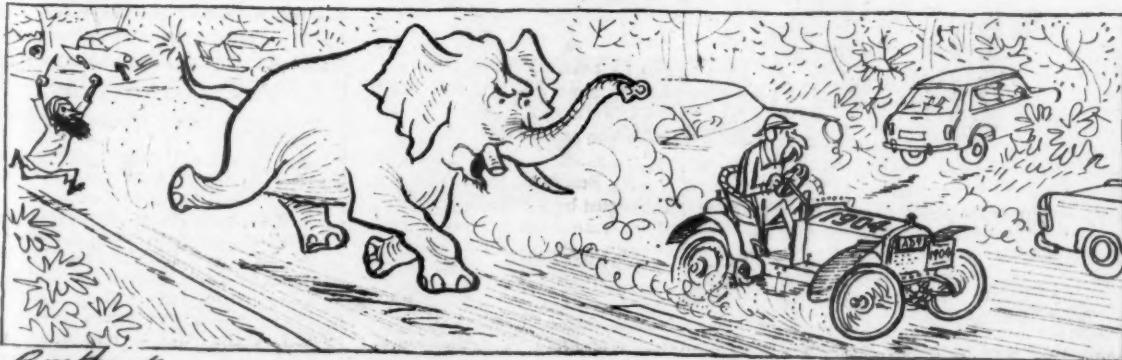
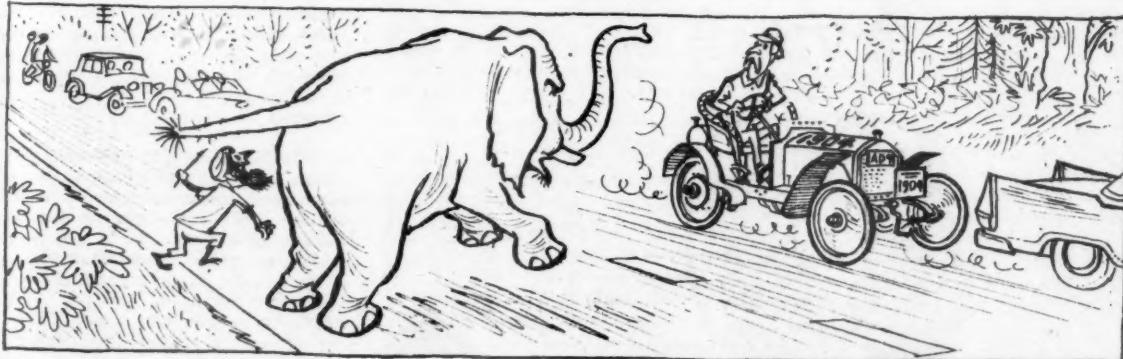
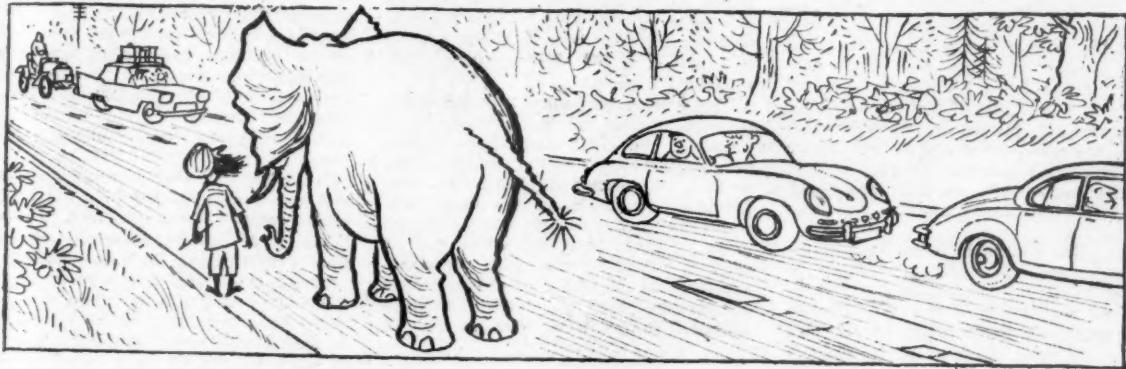
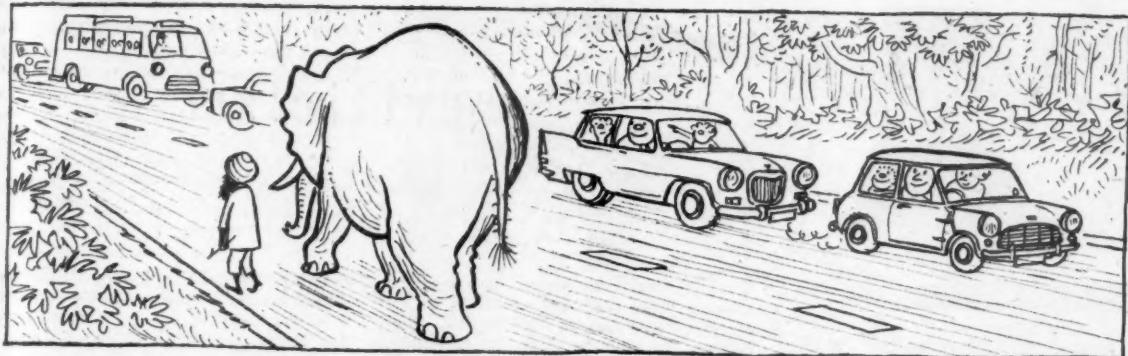
of fingers in picking is enough to bruise it, but that is of no consequence. Perhaps even better is James Grieve, another yellow apple with a thin translucent skin, and to eat one of these which has fallen ripe from the tree in October on to a bed of straw, and lain there for perhaps a week, touched by a light autumn frost, is probably the peak of apple gastronomy.

Cox's Orange Pippin, pleasant enough if kept until after Christmas, is even then inclined to be woody. Picked and eaten right away the Cox is poor fare indeed, but try taking a large one and baking it, without sugar, and you will never choose to cook any other variety this way. The Cox has a well-deserved reputation for consistent flavour and keeping quality, but while the fruit farmer is grading and packing bushel upon bushel of Coxes for sale, he is usually careful to store away in his own cellar a few trays of some old variety like Golden Knob from some gnarled and twisted tree in the corner of the orchard.

Another variety in this class is the D'Arcy Spice, said to originate in the village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy in Essex, and still flourishing in many parts of that fortunate county. Kept until January this russet apple would put the finest Cox to shame, but for some reason when grown out of its native county it loses heart and becomes quite ordinary.

Really large apples seem to have gone out of favour except, apparently, in Liverpool, where there is still a market for the enormous Charles Ross. It may be because, as one grower put it, the dockers there "like to take both hands to an apple."

— W. H. BOOTH



Brockbank



criticism

Smiley

AT THE PLAY

The Importance of Being Oscar
(APOLLO)

Chin-Chin (WYNDHAM'S)

Zizi Jeanmaire at the ROYALTY

ALAS, Micheál Mac Liammóir is in London with his Oscar Wilde programme for a fortnight only before going on a brief tour; at the end of which, with any luck for us, he will be coming back into town. It is unthinkable that we should have no more than a fleeting glimpse of what many people will think, and I with them, the most exciting theatrical experience of the year.

Mr. Mac Liammóir is an actor of the widest range and ability who would be better known to English playgoers if he had not loyally elected to stay in Dublin and spend his great talent on its Gate

Theatre. More than anyone he has all the guns to bring the spirit of Wilde to life on the stage, and in this brilliant programme he deploys them magnificently. There is no imitation; he wears a dinner-jacket, and his only props are the furniture of a corner of a drawing-room, with a vase of white flowers, changed in the interval to a spray of autumn. But of course he has a splendid Irish voice.

The evening is divided into two parts, before and after the trial. One gay and confident, the other descending through the agonies of gaol to the shabby ending in Paris. With unfaltering skill Mr. Mac Liammóir pulls out all the stops. He recites the poems, he acts scenes from the plays, he reads from the letters, and he connects these items with anecdotes superbly told and with a fluent biographical commentary that is very charmingly delivered and often so witty in its own

right that Wilde himself might have been glad to borrow from it.

In the first half we get such plums as the verses to Lily Langtry, a dramatic retelling of the story of Dorian Gray, the jewel scene from *Salomé* in its original French, and an intimidating Lady Bracknell digging into Worthing's past right down to the gladstone bag. Then, the mood changing, we get selections from *De Profundis* and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, the Clapham Junction incident and the final eclipse in a haze of absinthe at the Hotel d'Alsace.

It is a programme of enormous sympathy and intelligence, which only a great actor could compass. For a generation to whom Wilde is a dimming figure it may well start a new legend. At times wonderfully funny, it is also extremely moving. I think it could be cut with advantage to something nearer two hours; I believe this could be done in such a way that its effect would be sharpened without impairing the fullness of the portrait of Wilde as a man and an influence.

But as it is it is a rare feat—on the first night Mr. Mac Liammóir was only prompted once—as much for the delicacy of his literary perception as for his dazzling execution.

Chin-Chin is an odd little play with a curious flavour, which I liked in Paris two years ago. It has been adapted by Willis Hall—well, I think—from the French of François Billedoux. It is wittily conceived, but rather nebulously worked out; at the end one has to assume, still with a slight question mark, that its unhappy couple have not become lovers. They are the flotsam of a love affair which has removed their marriage partners and left them distraught and unsettled. They meet in a café to discuss their plight falteringly;



(The Importance of Being Oscar

MICHEÁL MAC LIAMMÓIR

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Cinema." Odeon, Leeds.

"Punch in the Theatre." Royal Festival Hall.

A window display of some of the drawings that won *Punch* the silver cup at the XIIIth Salone Internazionale dell'Umorismo is now on show at the Italian State Tourist Office, 201 Regent Street, London, W.1.

PUNCH ALMANACK 1961

The Almanack is now on sale at 2/6d. Postal subscribers will receive a copy without application; other readers are advised to ask their newsagents to reserve a copy for them. Copies can be posted to friends overseas for 3/- each, post paid.

he, a big, warm-hearted Italian, she an inhibited Englishwoman, the only daughter, one would guess, of a prim major in Cheltenham. The Italian, in his misery, is already on the bottle, which shocks the Englishwoman, though reluctantly she accepts a glass of wine. Their meetings become an unprofitable habit, from which gradually she picks up the trick of drinking, and they come to depend on one another as boozing partners. More than a little crazed, they shut themselves away from the world in her flat to concentrate on their misery in a long orgy of rum. Finally she goes to pieces so completely that she steals money from her son and goes off arm-in-arm with the Italian, two aimless tramps. Happy ending?

It is, as I said, an odd play, but it has quality. The first half is the better; in the second half we begin to ask questions which are not satisfactorily answered. Apart from supplying the cash for the final enterprise, the son seems to be dragged in. But the tension is surprisingly preserved. The study of the woman's disintegration is almost clinically objective, and the Italian, simple-minded and emotional, is in exact contrast to her frigid gentility. *Chin-Chin* is often touching and amusing; it has the strength and the weakness of a macabre fairy-tale.

Here it is extremely well acted by Celia Johnson and Anthony Quayle. Miss Johnson traces the woman's decline with great subtlety, and Mr. Quayle, who has never given a better performance, sinks himself brilliantly in the shambling childish Italian.

I was very disappointed in Zizi Jeanmaire's programme at the Royalty, though I could have throttled the oafs, failed band-leaders presumably, who slow-handclapped from the stalls the very noisy jazz orchestra that accompanied her. At the microphone she fizzles with vitality and gamine charm; her talent would be at its best in cabaret. She sang only at the end of the evening, by which time our spirits had been lowered by a hotch-potch programme that never reached distinction. Her ballet from Maugham's *Rain*, arranged by her husband Roland Petit, was a little monotonous, the male dancers were not exciting, and the 3 Horaces were in the vein of the Frères Jacques, but without their invention, except in a mifned game of ping-pong that went on too long. As for the jazz, it was deafening and brought nothing new, except the effectively casual leadership of Michel Legrand.



[*The Alamo*]

Davy Crockett (with nameless unit of the Mexican Army)—JOHN WAYNE

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Billy Liar (Cambridge—21/9/60), Albert Finney as a north-country Walter Mitty. *This Year, Next Year* (Vaudeville—26/10/60), very good acting in serious play by a promising playwright. *Waiting in the Wings* (Duke of York's—14/9/60), Noël Coward's private collection of grand old ladies.

—ERIC KEOWN

REP. SELECTION

Birmingham Rep., *Strange to Relate*, unspecified run.
Playhouse, Nottingham, *The Survivors*, until November 19.
Theatre Royal, Windsor, *Five Finger Exercise*, until November 19.
Guildford Rep., *Of Mice and Men*, until November 12.

AT THE PICTURES

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning
The Alamo

In the same line as *Room at the Top* and *The Angry Silence*, but more superficial than the first and with a more integrated, a more complete feeling of everyday life than the second, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (Director: Karel Reisz) is weaker than either in conventional narrative framework. Its basis of incident is indeed quite familiar—and so here we have another warning not to judge by subject. A summary of "what happens" would sound quite ordinary; the film is in fact continuously enjoyable.

It is slighter than *Room at the Top* because its central figure is a younger and

less developed character and because it deals with a shorter period of his career. The film's point, indeed, is that it does this. For most of the film Arthur Seaton (Albert Finney) is an uncaring youngster whose main concern is to get through his uninteresting job so that he can have the money to spend on women and booze. All this is figuratively the riotous "Saturday night" of his life; the film ends as he has taken a conscious decision to settle down, though with reservations—to adapt himself more quietly to its "Sunday morning."

Though the Northern accents sometimes wobble a bit, with Cockney vowels here and there, they are on the whole remarkably successful, and the film's main strength apart from Mr. Finney's performance, which is strikingly good, is its observation of telling details and its integration of them, as I've suggested, to give a convincing impression of ordinary people's life as a whole, leisure and work together.

From his own novel Alan Sillitoe has done the screenplay skilfully, with no flashy ingenuities, and using the short cut of dead-pan soliloquy I think only twice—the first time before the credit titles, to introduce the simple character of Arthur and "set up" his situation. Then we see Arthur at home, and see what he thinks of home; and in a pub, beating a sailor in a beer-drinking contest; and with Brenda (Rachel Roberts), a workmate's wife, of whom he begins to tire just as he has made her pregnant; and attracted by a younger girl (Shirley Anne Field) who wants an engagement ring before she will let him take any liberties. And throughout, the perceptive, amusing, compassionate observation of character and circumstances that makes all this perpetually interesting and fresh. At least two reputations are notably



"You haven't broken that big cup I use for borrowing?"

widened and increased by this film: the director's (Mr. Reisz was hitherto known only for good documentaries) and the principal player's (Mr. Finney was hitherto known only as a stage actor).

After ninety minutes of *The Alamo* (Director: John Wayne) there is an interval of fifteen minutes, and then the film proceeds for another hundred and five: in effect, three and a half hours. This enormous length I suppose is meant to be impressive; but is it really established that the average moviegoer is correctly impressed—the average moviegoer, who has killed so many genuinely good films by refusing to pay attention to them even for less than half this time?

It wouldn't matter if every minute were justified. But this is the perfectly simple story of the Texas fortress of the Alamo which in 1836 was held for thirteen days, to the death, by a handful of men against a Mexican army. It takes the whole of the first hour of the picture to explain the simple situation that is to end in this way, and to show the tensions among the defenders, who are all characters of a simple and familiar kind. The people and incidents, in fact, are in essence those of the "square" Western. The inordinate length comes from the thing's being padded out every few minutes with a patriotic, philosophical-sentimental speech. Among those from John Wayne himself as Davy Crockett, there is one beginning "Republic" is one of those words that make me tight in the throat," and one to God beginning "We haven't had many conversations, Sir," and one expressing considered approval of

trees. Speeches from other people, so far as I remember (that's the trouble—one can't be sure because they have no basis in the speaker's character) include one about those who "got courage—they ain't afraid to live," and one about "hitting against what's wrong," and one complimenting the foe ("It speaks well for men that they —"). A blind girl makes a speech, a dying preacher makes a speech. There is plenty of violent action, and it's very well done (though why they should add music to a sound-track that is already a mess of shattering explosions I don't know), and much of the spectacle is magnificent (Todd-AO Technicolor photography: William A. Clothier); but a great number of words could be cut.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The new Disney "true-life adventure" *Jungle Cat* is mostly about the jaguar and other big cats of the Brazilian rain forests but includes some birds and many other animals: wonderful pictures, commentary less successful. *The Criminal* (in and out of a British prison) is well made, with some unexpectedly subtle character touches, and deserves better than its publicity. The most striking film in London is *Shadows* (27/7/60 and 26/10/60). *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60), *The Millionairess* (2/11/60) and *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (28/9/60) continue.

Of the new releases there isn't one I'd recommend. Such things as *Solomon and Sheba* (141 mins.) I have an absolute blind spot for, and *The Siege of Sidney Street* (2/11/60—93 mins.) didn't grip me at all.

— RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Wordy Weather

A NXIOUS for flooded friends in the West Country I have lately been watching the weather forecasts with more than the customary half-an-eye. I suppose it is only right and proper that a nation so traditionally obsessed with its climate should have a daily television ritual to the Gods of the Weather, but my study has led me to question whether the present fanfare is really worth while. The high priests of meteorology nightly flick before us sacred charts of concentric kidneys crusted with triangles, half-warts and the mystic number 29.77. With mild, suburban jokes they scrawl black lines all over yesterday's chart, this morning's chart and to-morrow's chart and leave me, for one, a deal more confused than when I came in. I wait anxiously for them to stop talking and chalking so that I can see that little silent map of Britain at the end and find out what all the hugger-mugger amounts to. The map, it must be admitted, is usually the same—a line down the Pennines with "Heavy Rain" on one side and "Showers with Occasional Bright Intervals" on the other—but it does tell one all the prophecy they dare put to paper. For my licence

money they could cut the cackle and just run the map; give it to me straight, doctor.

In keeping with the weather at the time, Robert Reid's subject in his latest "Enquiry" (BBC) was "On Tap" and covered water in all its aspects, domestic, industrial and agricultural. So far in this series he has also taken us through the problems of the Highlands and Housing and his fact-packed half-hours have been painlessly informative. The editing is very good, pithy of word and sparing of film, and no constituent of the enquiry is permitted to drag the pace of the whole. Robert Reid never crowds the camera, a common disease of lesser interviewers who consider their faces more welcome than their material. He allows the interviewee to talk direct to us and is content in visual sequences to point the interest with voice unseen.

The new Granada serial "The Odd Man" is perhaps unfortunate in following hotly on the tracks of "No Wreath for the General." In comparison it has got off to no more than a moderate start. The ingredients for a good thriller are all there—intriguing plot, unusual marriage-bureau background, firmly drawn characters—and perhaps they will mix to better effect before the end. In the episodes to date everyone concerned has been trying much too hard to make weird and striking effects. There is a self-conscious artiness about the music, camera-work and lighting; our picture is restless with dramatic shadow and Savage Eye angles and the man-in-charge seems obsessed with the style of those cigarette commercials in which the Sinatra-figure is never alone. This striving for effect even holds up the action at times, halting the flow of events as if to give us a break for technical admiration. The acting is mainly set in the same hectic key and some of the players are apparently being encouraged to ham it up till further notice. Viccy, the mysterious female beatnik, is responding in such measure as to be quite unbelievable. The plum incredulity has been inflicted on Alan Tilvern, who is having to play Detective-Sergeant MacBride of London Town with a New York accent, Hank Jansen dialogue and manners straight out of "Dragnet." If the production would generally come down to a less feverish pitch, something more in tune with the quieter style in which Geoffrey Toone and Moultrie Kelsall are approaching their parts, I feel that "The Odd Man" would be able to tell his odd and interesting story to much better effect.

The first programme of "Parade" (BBC) with its skit on the "Age of Kings" and the presence of Dave King, promised well for the series. As a long-time admirer of the versatility of Alan Melville, however, it has saddened me to find that the opening quality has not been maintained in the succeeding instalments. "Parade" seems to have become just another variety show with a not over-distinguished bill, interspersed with portions of Melville, but without any pervading style about it all.

— PATRICK RYAN

BOOKING OFFICE

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

By SIRIOL HUGH-JONES

BRAN-TUB reviews of children's books generally conceal at this time of year a bracing Christmas-present message, rather as though you ought to dash out and stock up with three or four annuals from the counter next door to the glass birds and non-tarnishing tinsel. Not being able to understand why children should not read just as well on every day of the year I shall ignore the holly-and-ivy note and proceed calmly as though books for the young were not a seasonal avalanche.

Edith Unnerstad's *Grandmother's Journey* (Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d.), admirably and smoothly translated from the Swedish by Lilian Seaton, seems to me a delectable book, combining real bread-and-butter non-folksy simplicity of vision with a romantic though practical adventure and a satisfactory happy ending. It's about Anders, who is twelve and travels with his grandmother from Dalecarlia in Sweden to Stockholm, Helsingfors and St. Petersburg in search of work (the women make wigs and brooches out of real hair) and money. Marvellous foreign-exotic charm (skating on the Neva, steam-baths, sleighs—there's still a Czar in Russia—and a nice basket-making uncle called Jerkbil, rather splendidly), plus a sort of scrubbed shining realism that makes all the furniture solid and the weather positive.

Look at Castles, by Alfred Duggan (Hamish Hamilton, 6s. 6d.), is a straightforward irresistible guide to what a castle was like and why, simply written and full of important fact, rather as though you were planning to run one up for yourself. Frequently illustrated with brio by Raymond Briggs, showing individuals with chubby armoured legs being pincushioned with arrows and having at each other with large round rocks. Part of a series of umpteen Look Books and surely one of the best.

Sir John Smythe, V.C., continues the gorgeous saga of his dauntless heroine Ann Sheldon (of Paradise Island, where the Fam and the dogs are still ensconced) in *Ann Goes Hunting* (Max Parrish, 10s. 6d.). Ann

and young brother Podge are in Yorkshire for Christmas and hunting with the Pickthorn family ("of the old school"). Ann, as we would expect, is always in at the death on Black Prince, knows that you go slow at timber and fast at water, tracks down two horses stolen by the infamous Mr. Stoker and niftily turns a light bay into a skewbald with the aid of a paint spray. Her life is cheerful and eventful as ever, and in moments of crisis, which crop up in every other paragraph, she still calls to mind Monty hitting Rommel for six. Podge does jolly well too, fitted into the nice comfortable hollow in Mona's back.

Gerald Durrell (not to be confused with his brother the Sage of Alexandria) has another enchanting Bafut book out, *A Zoo in My Luggage* (Hart-Davis, 16s.). As he ambles pleasantly about West Africa, wearing a fidgety mongoose inside his shirt in the stoical manner of the Boy and the Fox, people greet him warily as "that animal maniac head office warned me about." Any amount of interesting, practically human beef is

tenderly collected, chatted to, boxed and taken back to the back garden at Bournemouth, and through it all looms the adorable six-foot-three of Fon of Bafut, that noble potentate who dances the samba, drinks whisky for his cough and speaks the most poetic pidgin. The book is wildly funny and one of the nicest things about Mr. Durrell is that he likes people very nearly as much as animals, a rare quality among zoo-men.

The Weirdstone of Brisingamen, by Alan Garner (Collins, 12s. 6d.), is absolutely rum, like the jacket on which a sinister person with black beard and fierce blue nose sits sternly, about to quaff some blood-red wine. There are two children staying with a farming couple in Cheshire, a bracelet with a magic stone, a nasty witch in a green car, a wizard with sleeping knights waiting to fight the Spirit of Evil, a couple of brave dwarfs called Durathor and Fenodyree and some peculiarly beastly underground crawlies called svarts who are always creeping up on you from behind. At first I took it to be a folkloric adventure with touches of C. S. Lewis and a skirmish now and again into the wilder regions of Charles Williams' country, but by the end, with a ravening wolf apparently munching up the entire landscape and people shouting "Drochs, Muroch, Esenaroth!" in all directions, I confessed myself baffled. Maybe fine for all who like a really good shudder over the final digestives and hot milk.

Witches, Witches, Witches (Chatto, 9s. 6d., together with other Terrific Triple Titles), is a witch-anthology put together by Helen Hoke, and is much better than the grubby illustrations would have you think. It includes some classic ladies such as Baba Yaga, "the bony-legged, the witch," who lived in a house on hen's legs that walked about the yard and was always gnashing her iron teeth and is still—perhaps because of her ebullient cheeriness—quite the worst nightmare of the lot.

Good additions to the current Victorian revival include another bumper volume from Gollancz (576 pages—15s.), called *To the Land of Fair Delight*, which I find a faintly upturning title, but the contents are fine: Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy*; *The Little Panjandrum's Dodo* by the mysterious G. E. Farrow (Miss Streatfeild in her introduction thinks he may have met a Snark who turned out to be a Boojum which you, little reader, may think is carrying cosiness a touch far); and George Macdonald's great classic, *At the Back of the North Wind*, which I dare not read again

BEHIND THE SCENES



—MARIE RAMBERT C.B.E.

Founder and Directress of Ballet Rambert

for fear of being harrowed through an entire box of Kleenex. Many cheers for original illustrations throughout.

More tears, 1870-vintage, sprinkle the moving pages of the great Mrs. Ewing's *Jan of the Windmill* (Fath Press, 15s.). Infant mortality, child given to good honest foster-parents under strange circumstances, old-mill background, kidnapping, hidden talent for painting, multiple deaths by cholera, reunion, happy ending. God made them high or lowly—oh the weeps. Peerless for tender-hearted female twelve-year-olds and their soppy mothers.

And if it's really a large handsome

present you're after in spite of everything you might look at the boldly illustrated three stories from the Arabian Nights (W. H. Allen, 15s.) retold by the indefatigable Shirley Gould, who has so far retold about a dozen Splendour Books, not to mention Junior Splendour Books, and shows no signs of flagging. The book is called *A Thousand and One Nights*, boldly and *tout court*. And Sasek's *This is New York* (W. H. Allen, 12s. 6d.), though it somehow hasn't quite the kick of his *Paris, London and Rome*, is still splendidly cheery stuff in its own high-class industrial design manner.

NEW NOVELS

Storyboard. John Bowen. *Faber, 15/-*
The Doomed Oasis. Hammond Innes. *Collins, 15/-*

Captain Pax. Joachim Fernau. Trans. Robert Kee. *Constable, 13/6*

The Real Silvestri. Mario Soldati. Trans. Archibald Colquhoun. *Andre Deutsch, 12/6*

Storyboard is as readable and cutting as most novels about the advertising world; but Mr. Bowen succeeds in making his discussion of the moral problems facing people trying to sell soap as complex and universal as if they were concerned with the treatment of Melos or whether to tell the politicians how to loose death from uranium. Purely as entertainment, now wildly comic, now agreeably sentimental, the novel comes off; but below its springy surface there is a layer of intellectually taut concern for humanity and the subtle

argument continues from Mr. Bowen's previous books. He has one of the most interesting minds among the younger novelists; but it is difficult to give any indication of that mind's propositions and conclusions with so elusive, though not evasive, a writer.

Unlike many novelists with something to say beyond describing the fates of their characters, Mr. Bowen is aware of complexity rather than simplicity. No harping for him on the claims of Mother Church or the inner doubts of capitalism or the tendency of provincial professors to do down the brighter students over high tea. He shows his ad-men as normal mixtures of decency and self-interest operating in a milieu where everything is more than life-size and he rebuts the stock arguments against advertising while in some cases replacing them. Are the concessions made by ad-men to the pressures of context really worse than those made in other fields? Perhaps ad-men have replaced brasshats, colonists and deacons in the long line of British Scapegoats. (What a series of cigarette-cards that would have made!) Mr. Bowen can argue from one position, change over to express the point of view of another character and then move on to a third and all the time be working away at the moral problem, the problem, if I am not oversimplifying, of how good a man can be without cutting himself off from other men.

The Doomed Oasis is an exciting yarn told by a Cardiff solicitor whose devotion to his clients' interests involves not merely conveying their property but travelling to South-East Arabia, riding on camels, dodging bullets and trying to settle their differences, differences between a hot-willed, pro-Arab, oil-prospecting father and his illegitimate son. The boy leaves the gang warfare of Barry docks to find him and then falls under the spell of a small oasis which the desert is invading because there is no oil to pay for putting the water channels in repair. The book keeps moving but never so fast that sight of the historical realities is lost. A good example of the adventure story with its feet in the present.

Captain Pax is a short account of an

episode on the Russian front. Apparently Captain Pax, the leader of the small band of Germans who tried to march a thousand kilometres home from behind the enemy lines, is a real man though the story is processed as fiction. It comes out very like other stories of starvation, bloodied feet, lurking death and the erosion of discipline; but it is a good one. You can't beat the Human Will as a protagonist.

The Real Silvestri is also very short and ought to be shorter; there is really only enough material for a short story. The narrator meets a woman he used to know and gets new light on an old friend whom he has always considered shy, kind, unattractive and virtuous but who she claims was a blackmailer who wrecked her life with a rich business man. It is a graceful little variation on the eternal triangle and on the search for a dead man's true character; nothing outstanding but a pleasant reminder of past pleasures in this rather outmoded branch of fiction. How odd it is, by the way, that short translated novels so often seem old-fashioned.

— R. G. G. PRICE

AMERICAN ERAS

The Liberal Hour. J. K. Galbraith. *Hamish Hamilton, 18/-*

*How doth the busy J.K.G.
Improve the liberal hour?*

Principally, it must be said, by showing up, with the familiar iconoclastic wit, the failures of the old, illiberal days; but also, perhaps, by cashing in on it, for this volume is slight compared with his earlier books. It represents the almost inevitable response of a man who is so much in demand and so full of inventiveness that he feels justified in giving his fans something to be going on with—in this case, mainly rewritten lectures. Yet it makes a very agreeable *hors d'œuvre* or, more aptly, *sorbet*, to divide one substantial dish from that which we hope will come next.

Much of it consists of variations on the theme of *The Affluent Society*. There are some gay new cracks at its absurdities—"The unopenable package, the goal of the container industry, is just around the corner," or "the ghastly surgery of the superhighway"—though the latter seems a little unfair. After all, superhighways are public works and they don't usually have advertisements on them, thus conforming with two important items in Galbraith's doctrine. (I must admit, though, that I have never discovered what happens on the far side of the wide lanes of trees which line the highways.)

More seriously, there are pertinent comments on production and the drawbacks of an economy arranged to supply machines rather than men. There is a brief refutation of the view that American prosperity depends on arms orders; and an intriguing assertion that "the American businessman, having accommodated himself to the scientist in the course of accommodating himself to the twentieth century, must now come to terms with the artist."

But the real joy of this book lies in its



debunking, and the finest debunking comes in the chapter in which Professor Galbraith comprehensively demolishes the plinth on which stands the man who, ironically enough, himself said that history is bunk: Henry Ford. Ford the businessman, Ford the inventor, Ford the manager, Ford the sage, Ford the mechanic—they all fall apart in the course of this moral story of what public relations can achieve, if it sets out to build the picture of a Great Man, with the Great Man's willing aid.

Whether or not the clock will jump forward in the way in which the Professor hopes—and Senator Kennedy sometimes echoes—remains to be seen. But if it does, the liberal hour which will have been gained will be associated as closely with Galbraith as the hour of daylight saved by Summer Time is with William Willett.

—TIMOTHY RAISON

The Good Years. Walter Lord. *Longmans, 25/-*

In this brightly written and richly dramatic survey of the years from 1900 to 1914 Mr. Lord looks at American political and social history through the calculating eyes of the features editor of a Sunday newspaper magazine supplement. The years break down into self-contained chapters of narrative action—murders, disasters, scandals, heroics and so on, history as the press saw it, and therefore incomplete and largely undigested. But there is no doubt about its interest and excitement. The highlights in a book of highlights are the descriptions of the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, Peary's journey to the North Pole in 1909, the great suffragette campaign, and the incredible Democratic convention of 1912 that took ten days and forty-six ballots to nominate Woodrow Wilson. There are, of course, photographs.

—BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

A MARTYR IN THE HOUSE

Margaret Roper. E. E. Reynolds. *Burns Oates, 16/-*

Margaret Roper was Sir Thomas More's eldest child. He was an exacting father, who made his children write constantly to him in Latin, but at least he made no distinction in the education of his daughters and his son, and even Erasmus was impressed by Margaret's learning. Each member of the family had a special work of charity; Margaret looked after a Chelsea almshouse and washed her father's hair-shirt. When he was in the Tower the meetings between them always began with the Penitential Psalms and the Litanies. If all this sounds uncomfortably austere there is no doubt that he was adored by his children, who were encouraged to have fun in a very hospitable house.

It was Margaret who, being prepared to take the oath, wrestled with him in his obstinacy. Their letters covering this prolonged debate make extraordinary reading. Mr. Reynolds has to guess a little at her whole character, but draws on contemporary sources for a valuable study of a great Tudor family.

—ERIC KEOWN



"Gerald, tell me again what it is we're angry about."

ASCETIC ACTOR

Benson and the Bensonians. J. C. Trewin. *Barrie and Rockliffe, 42/-*

In retrospect Frank Benson's muscular asceticism is faintly irritating. He drank cold milk, thought nothing of walking fifty-five miles when close on seventy, and kept his young cast bruised and aching from cricket, hockey and water-polo; but it is sad to hear the famous telegram "You must play Rugby" only referred to the character in *The Merry Wives*. He was hopelessly unbusinesslike, yet at one time there were four Benson companies on the road, and they were to be described by James Agate as the nursery of modern Shakespearean acting.

Mr. Trewin, who has been characteristically at pains in this exhaustive biography to collect evidence from surviving Bensonians, shows how deeply he was loved by his casts, and why. His acting was probably fairly summed up by Allan Monkhouse when he said he was a great actor without being a good one; but he was a dedicated teacher and leader, to whose enthusiasm the Memorial Theatre owes much. Entertaining as ever, Mr. Trewin adds to his laurels as a theatrical historian.

—OWEN K. RICE

CREDIT BALANCE

Looking at Pictures. Kenneth Clark. *Murray, 37/6.* The *Sunday Times* musings on sixteen pictures with additional material and illustrations including six colour plates. Ingenious educational mélange of biography, generalization about Art and Man and close examination of actual paintings. Expertly appetizing.

Peterley Harvest. David Peterley. Ed. Richard Pennington. *Hutchinson, 25/-.* Selection from diary preserved at McGill. Covers 1930-39 in life of young son of county family who spends time pottering with seventeenth-century research, listening to music, playing the Young Squire, presenting the Czech case after Munich, and ruthlessly womanizing. Unpleasant but vivid self-portrait of cad, snob and dilettante, but loses much of its interest if, as has been suggested, it is a fraud.

Assignment in Iraq. Allan Mackinnon. *Collins, 10/6.* Schoolmaster, used to play scrum half for Scotland, becomes involved in cloak-and-dagger business at time of Kassem's coup. Odd mixture of boyish heroics against credible political background.

Murder in Three Moves. Rutherford Watters. *Figgis, 15/-.* Stage Irish, but fun. Extrovert chess expert solves murder whose motives are rooted in The Troubles. Much blarney. Narrator, a cocky, charley poet, especially good.

STOCKING A STOCKING?

YOU will remember from childhood Christmases the thrill of sheer weight in a present. The solid worth of something chunky rang the bell every time. This Christmas, let us send your most discriminating friend about eighteen lb. of PUNCH. It will be divided into fifty-two weekly packages for convenience (sorry, fifty-three with the Almanack), but will impress nevertheless, not least because PUNCH is the lightest thing going for its weight. We send your greetings, too, adroitly timed. Just send us the name and address of the lucky recipient. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00). Write to: Department ED., PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4. U.S.A. and Canadian readers may remit by cheques on their own banks. Other overseas readers should consult their bankers or remit by postal money order.

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(BLOCK LETTERS)

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FOR WOMEN

A Flutter with the Gutters

YOU, I said to myself, will have to clean out those gutters. (If this is the word for when they run along the edge of the roof and have grass and moss instead of along the roadside and have snipes.) Those torrents of water in and outside the sitting-room window after the second last deluge of the week-end means that they are stopped. And as George is at the office all day and everyone knows you can't get a man in the country nowadays it's up to the wife to *manage*. After all, what with clinging to railings and helping with two world wars we women *have* shown . . .

So I fetched the extending ladder and extended it as far as it would go up to the roof. I climbed up. What a lovely view from up here, I thought. There's the church, and the vicar strolling as usual in the churchyard, and the pubs, and the new bungalows stretching away into the blue distance. One doesn't do *enough* of this sort of thing, frowsting in the house all day. It's a good thing I stand heights so well. Many a woman of my age and weight might have been daunted by a climb like this.

Now for some *real* cleaning. What a waste, having all this rich dark loam right up here! And stinging nettles, even on the roof! Really rather a lovely feeling scooping it all out and dropping it with a plop on the asphalt. Much more satisfying than niggly old house-work. This mulch will be growing vegetable marrows next—it's smelly enough—ha, ha. What a blessing to have a sense of humour. Now I'll just reach a *little* farther to the left and get that young oak tree or whatever it is, and then—the top of the ladder's coming too.

That's convenient. Oh no it isn't—help, I'm falling! No I'm not. Thank goodness for this drainpipe. I'm saved. What's all that noise? Oh, it's my heart—positively deafening. Hope it's not bursting or anything. It can't be *good* for it to bump like that. Rather a strain on the arms, too, pulling myself back, not to mention those internal injuries they talk about. Better go *straight* down and move the ladder along.

Supposing I *had* fallen all the way down with a plop on the asphalt? I'd have *had* it of course. Broken bones, laid up for weeks, perhaps even dead. Stove would go out, cat would starve, no one to look after the little ones. George would find my body in the evening.

And just look at my nails! What would my woman's magazine say if it knew? I'd probably lose George at once to the other woman and serve me right. My jersey's snagged too. There may be no substitute for wool for keeping out the creeping chills but I can think of plenty of better things for *not* getting caught on every ridiculous little splinter.

Perhaps I'd better *not* go up again after all. If the husband breaks his neck they go on paying his salary, at any rate at first, and there are insurances and so on. But if the wife does—no, I really owe it to them all to stay in one piece. After all, uprooting great oak trees isn't *really* woman's work.

So I left the ladder against the house for the burglars and made a cup of tea to steady my nerves. With a nervous, sensitive nature like mine one is so easily thrown off balance.

—FRANCES KOENIG

Beggar My Neighbour

THE homes I have lived in range from a palatial house with nanny, cook and general help to an East-end slum where I slept on a bed-settee with three of my children. A china cabinet, the landlady's pride and joy, rested alongside. During the night a child sneezed, and in the resultant communal paroxysm somebody's foot went through the cabinet's glass door. In the morning we learned that we would have to seek other accommodation.

Later I moved to a council house where one Saturday afternoon I thoughtlessly made some toffee apples for my children. Half an hour later there were fifty others at the kitchen door, each holding out sixpence in a grubby fist. They came, they saw, they conquered—no other week-end ever found me so rich in silver and so short of sugar again.

During another phase I lived in a transit camp where everything was run on such communal lines that I often found myself washing one child's face and drying another's. By contrast a farmhouse roof encouraged individuality: drinking water had to be pumped up from a private well; cooking and lighting were by the then primitive fuel of oil. In the north Oxford house of an Anglican bishop's daughter I learned to take part in attenuated conversations about the nature of man (a subject that has never lost its interest) and to parry difficult questions with the inevitable reply "Do you want a long answer or a short one?"

But not until I moved into suburbia did I ever come up against the feel of failure. In this panorama, where even in droughts the lawns looked lush, everything and everybody exuded success . . . except me. I had sometimes vaguely wondered how there could be one car to every four families when so many people had none. Now I understood how the law of averages worked. Here daddy kept the Daimler, the Bentley or Jaguar for business and left the Volkswagen for mummy to run about in. The family with three cars and a horse was of course in a social class by itself.

In this world of private tennis courts and swimming pools I once tentatively rang a neighbour's doorbell. A peal of muffled chimes flowed from my nervous fingers into the delicate hall. When the door opened I saw a flush of flawless paintwork in white, pink and grey; and wallpaper showing black and white

tendrils tenderly embracing on a bed of apple-leaf green.

When I returned home I looked at the lace curtains (bought for a few shillings at some auction) that draped my windows and thought of the lined damask ones along the road. I looked at the stairs, walls and floors . . . brownery everywhere . . . and shuddered.

In this land of lush living I began to lose my insouciance, to develop the kind of victimized temperament that buys shares in oil before a Middle East crisis or shares in wines just before a ban on imports. When I told myself that I had a nice big house, some devil whispered it had a nice big mortgage to match and that the place wouldn't look so spacious with a bit more furniture. If I went out with the two youngest (darlings in their own right) of our brood of seven they would always develop wet noses at the very moment we passed, but never stopped, the ermine-trimmed children from along the road.

Then just as I had reached the point of "so sad, thou canst not sadder," a neighbour from outside the charmed circle of success dropped in. I explained that I hadn't visited her earlier because I didn't want to disturb her with the new baby. "Oh you . . . I never mind you," she replied and glanced at my toddlers who were busy giving the house a lived-in look.

The words suddenly showed me how vital we, the non-successful . . . were to a materialistic society. It couldn't function otherwise. The successful needed us as an audience for their triumphs and as a measuring gauge for their own ability. To whom else could they speak of their latest acquisitions: the deep-freeze, the car, the spin dryer, the sink unit, the air conditioner? To whom else could they mention, but so casually, the holidays along the Costa Brava, in Nassau, Dubrovnic or Rome? Certainly not to their equally successful neighbours who by the overnight purchase of another gadget or a nifty week-end's ski-ing might be just that bit ahead in the rat race, whereas we were not even in the running.

Our presence was just as necessary to other non-successfuls. To whom else could they turn for mutual commiseration and support? Though productivity depended upon the successful and ambitious, society depended for its happiness upon us: the non-successful, the ones without. Failing us the essential cogs, the whole complicated machinery of modern economics would grind to a standstill.

It was a pleasant thought, and having thus summed up the position to my satisfaction I lolled back in my chair, content. How wonderful it was to bask at last in the sunshine of success!

— JENNIE HAWTHORNE

Hospitality

WE had Kenneth and Mary for Easter,

And Kate and the twins came in May. Then Louise for a week, with her bad-tempered Peke,

And it poured every day of their stay.

Then Joanna and Dick came for Whitsun

And a student from France in July.

And every week-end brings some dear old friend,

Who pops in as he's passing by.

There were Charles, Jean and Roger in August

Then next we had Betty and John, And old Uncle Paul, whose possessions were all

Left in cupboards for me to send on.

I cooked and I fed and sight-showed them,

And I learnt this the hard, hard way, It's an odd sort of boast—get a name as a host

And no one will ask you to stay.

— ANNE HAWARD



Toby Competitions

No. 139—Sin-Song

COMPETITORS are invited to write a (printable) song in favour of one of the Seven Deadly Sins. Limit 12 lines.

A framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up receive a one-guinea book token. Entries by Wednesday, November 16. Address to TOBY COMPETITION No. 139, *Punch*, 10 Bouvierie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 136 (About the Author)

By not having thought of it, our ancestors seemed to have missed a lot of spirited dust-jacket Lives of contemporary authors (the subject of this competition) from Moses ("... he has worked as ranch-hand, P.R.O., Pest Control Officer, caterer and courier ...") to Ouida. The classics came out especially strong; there were several good Shakespeares and Chaucers but, surprisingly, no Anons. The winner is

ROGER TILL

14 WESTERN HILL
DURHAM

BYRON

Although not especially tall for a member of the House of Lords, this much-travelled young man is every inch a poet. Stimulated by holidays with such boating friends as

Mr. and Mrs. Percy Shelley, he is particularly deft at hitting off the essential spirit of continental walking-tours with interesting people. Rarely writing anything unless he possesses an intimate personal knowledge of the subject, he was virtually the first person to introduce the conception of Don Juan into our national consciousness.

Not that Lord Byron has always been an adult. As a boy he played cricket for his school in the annual match against Eton at Lord's. A year or two later, it is said, he bit a bishop—but only for sport and to feel his way, as it were, in the great world.

Lord Byron's favourite colour is flesh.

The following are runners-up:

THE ILIAD AND OTHER POEMS

The late Dr. Homer, for many years Pallas Athene Professor of Modern Poetry in the University of Lesbos, where he was affectionately known as "Noddy" to the students, enjoyed a world-wide reputation as the author of short hymns for Local Festivals and full-length Sagas for recitation at International Gatherings. The Homeric Society, founded after his death by his pupils and colleagues, presents this first complete edition of his works, which the master never committed to paper himself, preferring the spoken to the written word, and the freedom this gave him to polish and re-polish his masterpieces—he was working on the "Hades" episode the day before he died. Rescued by Dr. Apollo, his predecessor in the chair of poetry, from the early tragedy of being exposed on Lemnos by his well-meaning parents (he was born blind) and apprenticed as a fisherman by his short-sighted foster-parents, he took a double first at Chios, with special commendation for his performance in the "Viva," and was elected to a fellowship at Lesbos where he remained for the rest of his life. He was unmarried.

C. H. L. Davey, *The Lamp House, Burrrington, Bristol*

HORACE is the pen-name of Mr. Q. H. Flaccus, whose meteoric career might form the theme of an epic by his friend "Verge" Maro. Of modest middle-class origin, his father sent him to the well-known school of "Thrasher" Orbilius, whence he gained an exhibition at Athens. During the Civil War he was forcibly enrolled in the Republican Army, but, as he humorously observes, "adopted evasive tactics" at Philippi. He judiciously lay low for a time, doing humble clerical work supplemented by freelance journalism. His mordant satires, caricaturing post-war manners, gained him some notoriety, and eventually attracted the notice of Mæcenas, Cæsar's discerning P.R.O., who saw in him a

potentially valuable supporter of the new régime. But "Horace" is no mere propagandist. His "Odes," of which three volumes have appeared to date, revealed a supreme master of cultivated lyric charm.

R. Kennard Davis, *On-the-Hill, Pilton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset*

Samuel Johnson, born in 1709, the son of distinguished bibliophile, was educated at one of our better schools and Pembroke College, Oxford, where his amiability, wit and lavish hospitality won him many friends. In 1735, he married a charming lady and established a flourishing academy for the sons of gentlemen. His heart, however, was not in teaching and he returned to his first love, Journalism, becoming a Parliamentary reporter whose accuracy and impartiality were the wonder of both Whigs and Tories. He has written many plays, poems and essays and has compiled with vast zeal and nicety of definition a Lexicon whose popularity, he frankly admits, was due to the generosity of the Right Honourable the Earl of Chesterfield.

Vera Telfer, *27 Lauderdale Mansions, Maida Vale, W.9*

Mr. C. J. H. Dickens is now widely known for such lively books as the "Sketches by Boz" and the "Pickwick Papers," though he himself is said to maintain that his real talents are not literary but histrionic. Still a young man, he has already had a varied experience of life. A private education was followed by his appointment, at an unusually early age, as a junior executive of a flourishing commercial concern. Then for a while he saw himself as a solid, respectable family solicitor, a prospect he abandoned to join the staff of the *Morning Chronicle*, where he revolutionized Parliamentary reporting by introducing shorthand. A confirmed bachelor, he yet knows the fair sex through and through, and delights to depict them in his books, which he writes with great care in a large, flowing hand, with one of the new steel pens.

Allan M. Laing, *19 Wavertree Nook Road, Liverpool, 15*

As richly gifted with looks as with genius, Ouida has long since given up trying to conceal her descent from Charlemagne on the one side and Louis XIV on the other. Finding her early career as a secret agent too unadventurous, in a fit of ennui she rode bareback across the Sahara, an experience turned to good account in this book—possibly, as she herself concedes, "the greatest novel of all time."

The only woman ever granted a commission in the Coldstreams and the toast of every mess, she never spends more than three days over a novel, dictating from an ormolu bath (the gift of Emperor Napoleon III).

Molly Fitton, *108 Prince Street, London, S.E.8*



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